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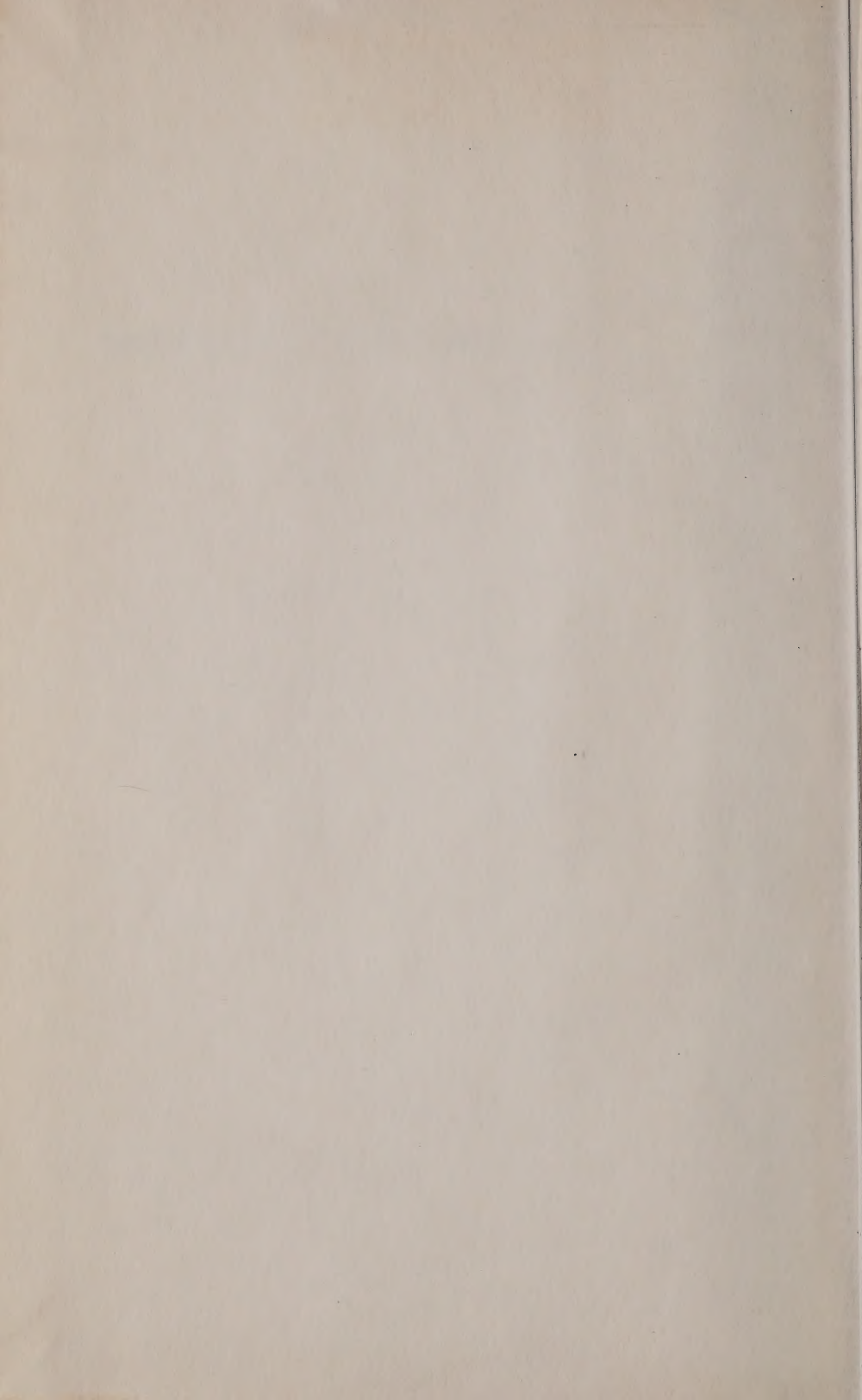
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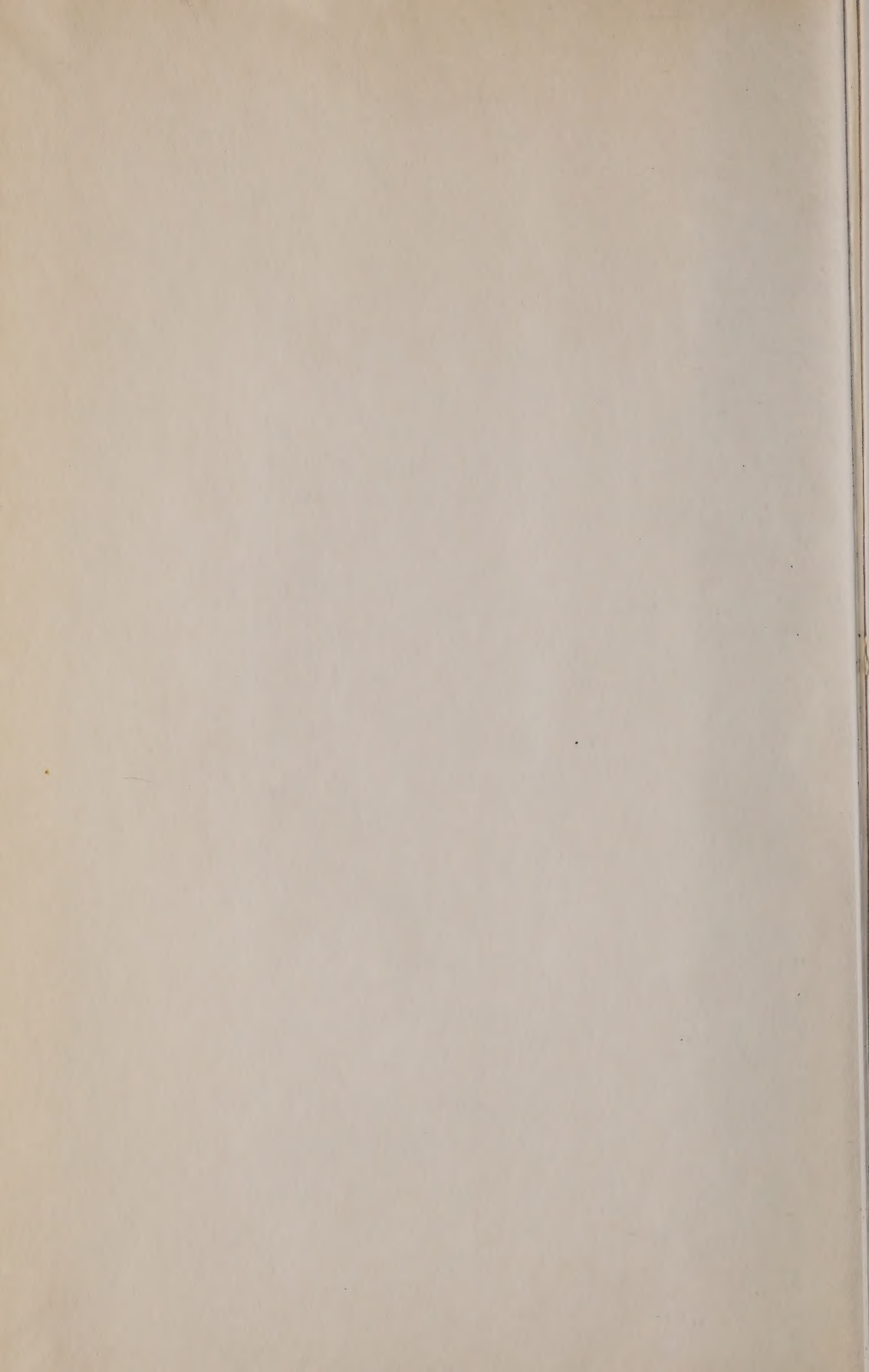


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# WAR WAS THE PLACE

A Centennial Collection of  
Confederate Soldier Letters



## OLD OAKBOWERY

Chambers County, Alabama



CHATTAHOOCHEE VALLEY

HISTORICAL SOCIETY

BULLETIN 5 — NOVEMBER 1961

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1961



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## DEDICATION

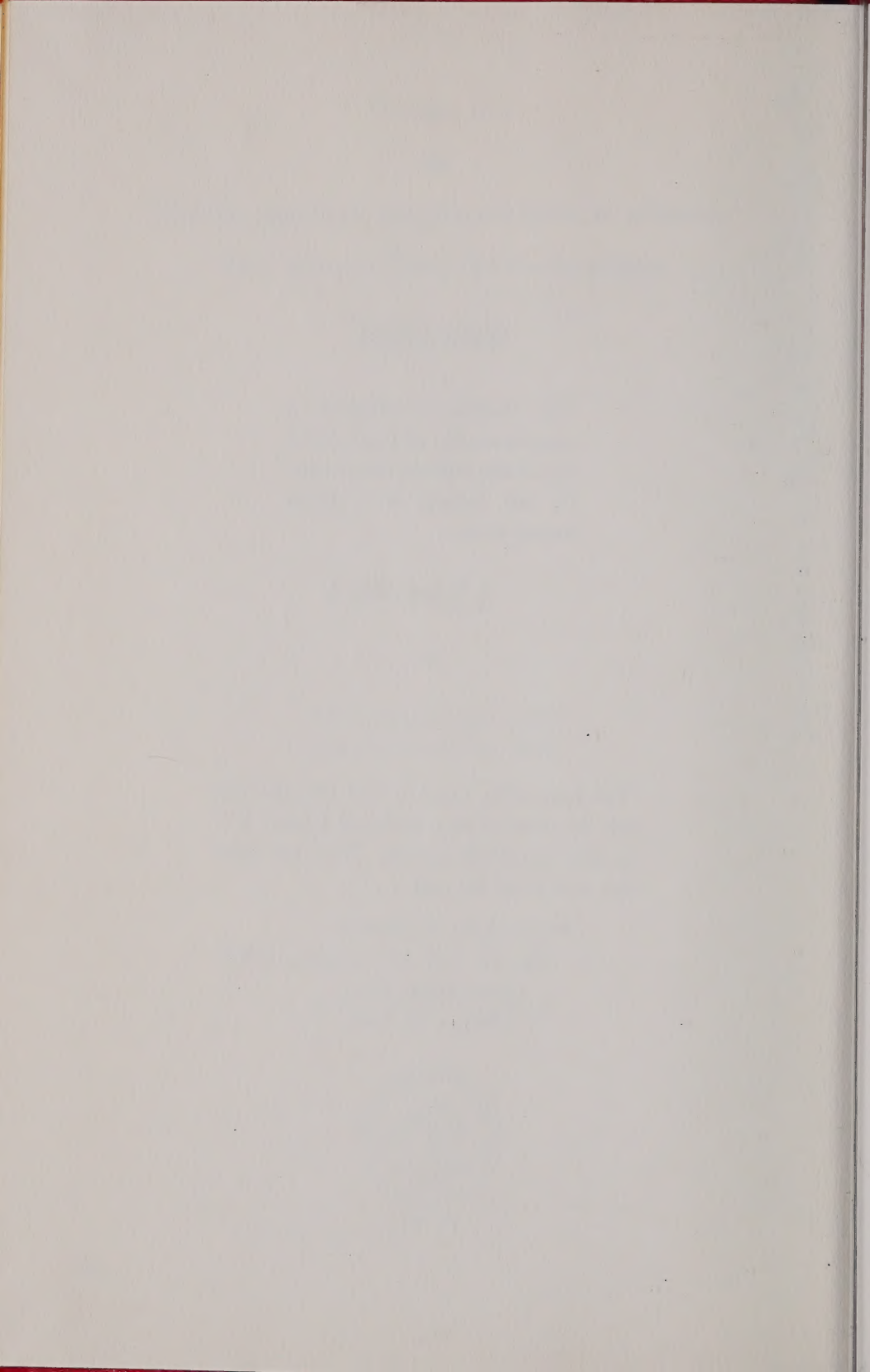
This *Bulletin* is dedicated in commemoration of Confederate and Union Soldiers everywhere, for our heritage is a nation united forever.

1326953



"You have often heard it said that the *war* was the *place to try a man* and I know it is so from actual observation. There are some that will stand the test. . . "

*Private John D. Johnson,*  
Co. D., 3rd Ga. Calvary, C.S.A.  
Chattanooga, Tenn.  
August 30, 1862





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## FOREWORD AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



The Civil War Centennial years of 1961-1965, a century after that most terrible and personal war between brothers in these United States of America, bid fair to produce a peak of renewed interest in "Our War."

Home news then made the war bearable to the soldiers, just as letters and news of the "boys" made the wait and sacrifices at home endurable. What better way to catch the personality, aspirations, feelings and humor of those men than that they *write us* from the camps, battlefields and hospitals, the towns and villages of the Confederate States, as the war waged around them?

Accordingly, we have collected from members and friends letters written by soldiers in the Confederate States Army who lived in the area of Troup and Harris Counties, Georgia, and Chambers County, Alabama, in the vicinity of West Point, Georgia. A selection attractive to the Civil War student and general reader alike has been made from the resulting collection of over one hundred letters. The letters have been little, if in any wise edited. Perhaps more letters can be published in future *Bulletins*.

Private John W. Hodnett, of Evans' Guards, a Troup County, Georgia, unit wrote his sister, Mary, on October 7, 1861 that "you must excus my bad speling and riting I am so ancious to hear from home I can hardly bee still." We may be sure all mistakes were forgiven then and we must overlook them now.

Two letters of women serving in the Confederate hospitals commemorate, in a small way, the nobleness and compassion of their hearts. Included are four letters of Confederate Surgeon John Wimbish Oslin, Senior Surgeon in Charge, Reid Hospital, West Point, Georgia.

Outstanding papers on local historical subjects, presented as program material during 1959-1960, round out *Bulletin* 5, in furtherance of the Society's objectives.

Chattahoochee Valley Historical Society appreciates the cooperation



of the following *Families* of this area who graciously allowed use of family letters and material in this publication:

ATKINSON: Letter, 1st Lt. Thomas J. Atkinson

BARROW: Letter, Pvt. James H. Barrow

ELIAS DAVIDSON: Letter, Pvt. Thomas L. M. Davidson

FORD-STYWALD: Letter, Pvt. Elijah Ford

JOHN D. JOHNSON: Letters, Pvt. John D. Johnson

CHRISTOPHER C. JONES: Letter, Pvt. James H. Jones

CORDELIA DORMON LAWSON (Mrs. P. H.): Letters, Pvt.  
Jesse C. Dormon

LUCIUS B. LOVELACE: Lovelace Letters

MERZ-HEYMAN-STERNE: Letters, Pvt. Louis Merz; Pvt. Ansel  
Sterne

HENRY W. MILLER: Miller Letters

MARY STEPHENS SHAEFER (Mrs. W. G.): Hodnett-Stephens  
Letters

TILLERY: Letters, Pvt. J. C. Tillery

WHITE-WISDOM: Letter, Pvt. George A. White

ZACHRY: Letter, Capt. Alfred F. Zachry

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## NOTE

In copying and editing the Confederate Soldier Letters, diligent care has been taken to transcribe them faithfully. Due to their condition, however, absolute accuracy is not guaranteed.

Footnotes have been added in many instances to clarify the text and aid in orienting the letters to the events of the stirring times. A study of the *Index* will also be helpful.

WILLIAM H. DAVIDSON

Editor and Publications Chairman

MUSTER ROLL OF SOLDIERS  
WHOSE LETTERS APPEAR HEREIN

◆   ◆

ATKINSON, THOMAS J.

Private, April 26, 1861, West Point Guards, Troup County, Ga.; Co. D, 4th Regt. Ga. Vol. Inf., Doles-Cook Brigade, Army Northern Virginia, C.S.A. Elected 2nd Lieutenant April 28, 1862. Wounded at Battle of King's School House, Va., June 25, 1862. Elected 1st Lieutenant July 15, 1862. Died of pneumonia at camp near Guinea's Station, Va., April 7, 1863.

BARROW, JAMES H.

Private, July 30, 1863, Capt. Alfred F. Zachry's Company, Chambers County, Ala.; Co. F, 59th (61st) Ala. Regt. Inf. Vol., C.S.A. Discharged account disability February 22, 1865, after convalescence Reid Hospital, West Point, Ga. Born October 29, 1821, died January 16, 1908. Buried Providence Church Cemetery, Chambers County, Ala.

CURTWRIGHT, JOHN C.

Captain, March 4, 1862, Troup Light Guards, Troup County, Ga.; Co. E, 41st Regt. Ga. Vol. Inf., Army of Tennessee, C.S.A. Killed at Perryville, Ky., October 8, 1862. Buried beside his wife in Hillview Cemetery, LaGrange, Ga., many years later after discovery of his grave at Perryville by Bishop Warren A. Candler, of Atlanta, Ga., his son-in-law.

DAVIDSON, THOMAS LEVERETT MARION

Private, Co. D, 3rd Georgia Calvary, C.S.A. Prior to joining Wheeler's Calvary, was Private, Capt. Ben Cameron's Company, Georgia State Troops, "Sallie Fannie Reid Guards," organized near West Point, Ga., October 25, 1861. Surrendered with General Johnston's Army, April 26, 1865. Born Troup County, Ga., June 7, 1841, died May 3, 1919. Buried Mt. Zion Church Cemetery, Stewart Ave., Atlanta, Ga.

### DORMON, JESSE C.

Private, Co. I, 2nd Louisiana Regiment Inf. Vol., 4th Brigade, Johnson's Division, Ewell's Corps, Army Northern Virginia. Enlisted in spring of 1861. Lived at Chapel Hill near Buffalo, Chambers County, Ala. Born July 23, 1837, died July 12, 1920 at Altoona, Ala.

### FORD, ELIJAH

Private, Co. H, 67th Regt. Ala. Vol., Allen's Brigade, Martin's Division, Wheeler's Corps, Army of Tennessee. Lived near Gay, Georgia.

### HODNETT, GEORGE TIP

Private, February 28, 1863, Evans' Guards, Troup County, Ga.; Co. K, 13th Regt. Ga. Vol. Inf., Evans' Brigade, Gordon's Division, Army Northern Virginia, C.S.A. Died in hospital at Hamilton's Crossing, Va., April 8, 1863.

### HODNETT, H. H.

Private, July 8, 1861, Evans' Guards, Troup County, Ga.; Co. K, 13th Regt. Ga. Vol. Inf., Evans' Brigade, Gordon's Division, Army Northern Virginia, C.S.A. Wounded at Monocacy, Md., July 9, 1864. Died of wounds at Monocacy, Md., July 12, 1864.

### HODNETT, JOHN M.

Private, July 8, 1861, Evans' Guards, Troup County, Ga.; Co. K, 13th Regt. Ga. Vol. Inf., Evans' Brigade, Gordon's Division, Army Northern Virginia, C.S.A. Died in service.

### HODNETT, JOHN W.

Private, July 8, 1861, Evans' Guards, Troup County, Ga.; Co. K, 13th Regt. Ga. Vol. Inf., Evans' Brigade, Gordon's Division, Army Northern Virginia, C.S.A. Died of smallpox near Middletown, Va., November 24, 1862.

### HODNETT, SAMUEL G.

Private, May 1, 1862, Evans' Guards, Troup County, Ga.; Co. K, 13th Regt. Ga. Vol. Inf., Evans' Brigade, Gordon's Division, Army



of Northern Virginia, C.S.A. Surrendered Appomattox Court House, Va., April 9, 1865. Died October 24, 1906. Buried Hodnett Family Cemetery, near Cannonville, Troup County, Ga.

#### HODNETT, THOMAS JEFFERSON

Private, May 1, 1862, Evans' Guards, Troup County, Ga.; Co. K, 13th Regt. Ga. Vol. Inf., Evans' Brigade, Gordon's Division, Army of Northern Virginia, C.S.A. Surrendered Appomattox Court House, Va., April 9, 1865.

#### HODNETT, WILLIAM H. H.

Private, November 18, 1862, Evans' Guards, Troup County, Ga.; Co. K, 13th Regt. Ga. Vol. Inf., Evans' Brigade, Gordon's Division, Army Northern Virginia, C.S.A. Wounded. Surrendered Appomattox Court House, Va., April 9, 1865. Died September 5, 1914. Buried Long Cane Cemetery, Troup County, Ga.

#### JOHNSON, JOHN D.

Private, Co. D, 3rd Georgia Cavalry, "Wheeler's Cavalry." Paroled from Capt. Dent's Battery, Hoxton's Battalion, Smith's Brigade, C.S.A., at Meridian, Miss., May 10, 1865 to return to his home in Harris County, near West Point, Ga.

#### JONES, JAMES H.

Private, March 4, 1862, Troup Light Guards, Troup County, Ga.; Co. E, 41st Regt. Ga. Vol. Inf., Army of Tennessee, C.S.A. Killed at Perryville, Ky., October 8, 1862.

#### LOVELACE, JAMES LEGGETT

Private, May 12, 1862, West Point Guards, Troup County, Ga.; Co. D, 4th Regt. Ga. Vol. Inf., Doles-Cook Brigade, Army Northern Virginia, C.S.A. Born September 27, 1830, killed in action at Sharpsburg, Md., September 17th, 1862.

#### LOVELACE, LUCIUS TODD CICERO

Private, August 17, 1861, West Point Guards, Troup County, Ga.; Co. D., 4th Regt. Ga. Vol. Inf., Doles-Cook Brigade, Army Northern Virginia, C.S.A. Wounded and disabled at Wilderness, Va., May 5, 1864. At home on wounded furlough August 31, 1864,

unable rejoin command. Born December 1, 1839, died January 5, 1921. Buried Lovelace Family Cemetery, Troup County, Ga.

#### MERZ, LOUIS

Private, April 26, 1861, West Point Guards, Troup County, Ga.; Co. D, 4th Regt. Ga. Vol. Inf., Doles-Cook Brigade, Army Northern Virginia, C.S.A. Killed in battle at Sharpsburg, Md., September 17, 1862.

#### MILLER, JOHN W.

Private, April 26, 1861, West Point Guards, Troup County, Ga.; Co. D, 4th Regt. Ga. Vol. Inf., Doles-Cook Brigade, Army Northern Virginia, C.S.A. Appointed 4th Sergeant in 1862. On sick furlough, August 31, 1862. Discharged. Enlisted in Mississippi cavalry, Brigadier General Wirt Adams' Brigade.

#### MILLER, NICHOLAS W.

2nd Lieutenant, November 13, 1861, Mountain Tigers, Harris County, Ga.; Co. H, 31st Regt. Ga. Vol. Inf., Evans' Brigade, Gordon's Division, Army of Northern Virginia, C.S.A. Elected 1st Lieutenant December 1, 1861. Captured at Sharpsburg, Md., September 17, 1862. Released November 11, 1862. Elected Captain June 1, 1863. Wounded at Hatcher's Run, Va., February 6, 1865. Captured in Richmond, Va., hospital April 3, 1865. Died, result amputation of left leg, in Fair Grounds Hospital, Petersburg, Va., June 5, 1865.

#### STEPHENS, WILLIAM ANDERSON

Private; 1st Sergeant; Lieutenant, Co. K, 46th Ala. Regt. Inf. Vol. C.S.A. Died at Johnson's Island, Ohio, Prison Camp, March 15, 1865. Buried cemetery Sandusky, Ohio, Grave No. 149, Section 7.

#### STERNE, ANSEL

Private, April 26, 1861, West Point Guards, Troup County, Ga.; Co. D, 4th Regt. Ga. Vol. Inf., Doles-Cook Brigade, Army Northern Virginia, C.S.A. Appointed regimental musician. Captured at Winchester, Va., September 9, 1864.

#### TILLERY, JOHN CALHOUN

Private, Capt. Ficklan's Company, Major Barnard's Battalion; 18 months service, James Island, near Charleston, S. C., and in Florida.

Discharged at Smithville, N. C. Born December 18, 1822, died June 28, 1903. Buried in Tillery Family Cemetery, Lee County, Ala.

#### WHITE, GEORGE AUGUSTUS

Private, Fannin Guards, Troup County, Ga.; Co. B, 60th Ga. Regt. Vol. Inf., April 1862; Lawton's Brigade, Jackson's Division, Army Northern Virginia, C.S.A.; later Gordon's Brigade and Evans' Brigade. Wounded. Lived near old Salem Camp Ground, Troup County, Ga. Born April 11, 1828, died June 4, 1906. Buried Salem Church Cemetery, Troup County, Ga.

#### ZACHRY, ALFRED FLOURNOY

Captain, July 30, 1863, Zachry's Company, Chambers County, Ala.; Co. F, 59th (61st) Ala. Regt. Inf. Vol., Battle's Brigade, Army Northern Virginia, C.S.A. Wounded and disabled at Spottsylvania Court House, Va., May 1864; left arm amputated.

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SOURCES: *Roster of the Confederate Soldiers of Georgia, 1861-1865*, by Henderson, Lillian; 4 Vol., Hapeville, Ga., 1960; *History of the Doles-Cook Brigade*, by Thomas, Henry W., Atlanta, Ga., 1903; *Confederate Military History*, Ed. by Evans, Gen. Clement A., Atlanta, Ga., 1899; *Alabama*, by Brewer, W., Montgomery, Ala., 1872; *Records of Fort Tyler Chapter, U.D.C.*, West Point, Ga.; Family Records; General Services Administration, National Archives.

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Head Quarters West Point Guards  
Gosport Navy Yard Portsmouth Va May 12/61

Master A C & H W Miller  
West Point Ga

Dear Bro's

The letter from A. C. was rec'd in the box with sundry articles yesterday evening. Al I am much obliged to you for writing as I was getting very anxious to hear from home— & also say the same to Carrie— I will be pleased to receive your favors often write me any changes that take place in the different vocations of my relatives, friends & acquaintances. Is Jimmie Baker still in West Point? I have seen a letter from there which stated that Mr Chisholm locked up his store whenever he went home—from this I have concluded that J Baker is probably not now in his employment. Also write me in regard to the wheat as I have also learned that the rust was damaging it. Write all the news— In regards to our trip here— it was one more like the march of a triumphant Army returning from the conquest of treacherous foes than like volunteers going to the Conflict, but as I & others have written a description of the scenes & occurrences on the route I will write more about the things here.

We arrived here last Monday about 2 O'clock PM & were escorted by the Ex Mayer of this city, to the place where we are now quartered. We are on the first up stairs floor in a large brick building—which I guess is some 400 feet long & about 80 feet wide—there are including our Company about 500 or 550 soulders in the same floor—each Corps has a certain part; or space for its members & of this space the officers of the different Companies have control—I believe the West Point Guards is the most quiet one that is up here—some of the Corps are very noisy—this annoys any one at first—but we have become so accustomed to it that but few are in the least disturbed by the noise—although we are deprived of the luxuries which we had at home yet the members are cheerful & seem to enjoy themselves finely—you know it is an old saying that misery loves company—this may to a considerable extent cause us to be lively. Each one feels & knows that he is as well situated as the others. The members of the W P G are tolerably well with the exception of Colds—we left three of our ranks sick in Augusta. Mr. Sterne, Mr. Freel and Mr. W. F. James. *They have all got well & reached here Thursday evening*— I have heard of the death of one Ga Volunteer since we arrived—he was a member of the Macon County

Volunteers—died yesterday of Pneumonia & his remains will be started home today. The Citizens say they have excellent health here—not liable to much sickness (except Epidemic diseases) from their healthful appearance I am not disposed to doubt what they say in regard to health—Within ten miles of this place there are about 15,000 troops (so I understand) ready for the Conflict if it should commence here. There are I presume now in the service stationed at the different points of defenses here about 7,000 Soulders about 2,000 are in the Navy Yard—of the remaining 5,000 some are at the Marine Hospital—some in Norfolk City—some at Fort Norfolk—some at Cravey Island & at other Batteries on the banks of the Elizabeth River.

Our means of defence are now better than they have been—or rather in a better condition. I have seen the remains (or a part of them sticking up out of the water) of the vessels that were burned by Lincoln's Soulders. They also burned several valuable buildings in the Yard—the loss by this fire supposed to be some 8 millions of dollars. The Government property now here is of immense value estimated at various amts.—the lowest estimate I have heard any one give is 20 millions of dollars. Portsmouth is on the West & Norfolk on the east side of the Elizabeth River—the River is about 1 mile wide here at other places it is  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile wide. We cross in boats when we go over to the other side. The population of Portsmouth is about 15,000 & of Norfolk 18,000 inhabitants (including New Town). Both are pretty places. We can get fish in abundance. Phillip Lanier bought a dimes worth the other day which was enough for a meal for about a dozen men, oysters, crabs & C are also plentiful & cheap. Yesterday, I with several others members visited Cravey Island—(went in a boat). This island is about 5 or 6 miles from here down the River—(it is the place where the Americans repel the British in 1812)—this is the outside defense that we have here. They have Cannons & batteries sufficient I presume to beat back any force which Old Abe may see proper to send—if they have not men enough they could get them in a short time if the fight should commence there—from this Island (with a small telescope) I looked at one of the War Ships of Lincoln's. I also saw Fortress Monroe. Could only see the outline of the Fortress. This is said to be the Gibraltar of America. While on the Island I saw Cannon balls fired across the bow of 2 Schooners, the balls struck the water in front of them & made several bounces on the water. I could not see the balls but could see the Water splash. As they would strike they hauled down their sails quick anchored & sent men ashore to show their papers—one had passengers from the "Cumberland" (one of Abe's War Vessels) the passengers were bound for Norfolk—the other was a fishing boat with 3 men

on it. When they came on shore one of the men said—they almost as well be killed as frightened nearly to death—they say that about 5,000 of the U.S. troops stay at Monroe & on the vessels that stay about there. As my sheet is covered I must close with my best wishes. I remain Yours truly

J. W. Miller



Gosport Navy Yard, Va.  
May 15, 1861

Dear Heyman,

I intended to answer your letter of the 8th yesterday but circumstances—"business and duty before pleasure." I had to clean my musket yesterday because I had to go on guard last night, and there is always an inspection of guns at the mounting of the guards. There were eight men from eight companies, 64 in all. From our company we had the greatest crowd that could have been picked. I give you the names and then judge for yourself. Milton E. Reese, Jasper Smith, Parker, McCoy, Lyon, McGonigal, John Miller and Louis Merz. Who can beat it? We left the guard house at 6 in the evening to post sentinels and my post being No. 16, I was the last one to be posted, and arrived at my place at seven o'clock, so you see it just took one hour to get around, and we were guard No. 2. Guard No. 1 is on the other square, so you can have an idea how extensive the Navy Yard is. John Miller was posted No. 15 in speaking distance of me. A cat bothered me mightily and I believing that Old Abe was in her tried my bayonet, but she left in disgust. At 10 O'clock came a green corporal who ought to have come at 9. Then the following conversation took place. As he approached, I called "halt"—"who comes here, relieve guard with the password. Advance and give it." He advanced on the point of the bayonet and give it. The password is right and I came to a arms port and was relieved. We all marched then to the guard house and Monk, John and myself spread our blankets on the hard floor, used Monk's blanket for a pillow, and John's for a cover, and not having any more duty to do, went asleep, but Monk remarking that it was the first time he had slept in the guard house. This morning at 6 o'clock we were dismissed, went to our quarters and had our breakfast. I then discharged my gun in the Elizabeth River, not hurting anybody. I had to clean it again which kept me about 1 hour busy.

James Cooper arrived here last night, but I did not shake his hand until this morning. He reports all well, and the insurrection of which Mr. Jackson wrote an existing account as calmed down and being more smoke than fire. He also informed us that you, Dear Heyman, hast joined the companie at West Point, and I now entreat you as a brother not to leave home. I left there leaving everything in your care and your hands and you cannot and must not leave your post without my consent. There are plenty of families in the country that have not sent anybody yet and you can do just as much service at home than here or anywhere else. The duty here is not hard and James Cooper says that I am looking very well and I know that I feel as well as anybody. Day before yesterday we had William Hulbert and Willy Hill for cooks and John Miller and myself cleaned the dishes, plates, knives and forks, and done it well. We hired a cook and she went into service yesterday for \$5.00 a month, a strong likely woman.

There are twelve in our mess, so it won't cost much. Phillip, Bledsoe, Greer, Spurling, W. Hill, John Miller, Hulbert, Christian, White, Harwell, Pain Johnson and Myself. You could not pick a better crowd. On our right is the officer's mess. On our left is Corporal Duffey and whenever I want to smoke or chew tobacco, I go over into the officer's mess because we don't allow spitting on our floor. Most of the companies left our Hall this morning for the camps and we have lots of room now, but I believe we will move in a day or so. Last Monday night after we had gone to bed and most of us sound asleep, somebody said that the d—— town was on fire. I got up in a minute and was under arms believing that Mr. Lincoln was in the middle of the fire. I wish he had been. Jasper got mighty scared. He could not find his boots and wanted a bit of powder to load his revolver. Jasper being on guard last night had in one hand his revolver in the other his musket. The boys teased him right much. He is the only scared man we got.

But to come back to the fire, Frost and Darden went down to see what was the matter *a la* West Point, and were promptly arrested by a sentinel and could only be released by the corporal of the guard. I teased Dock mighty for going out, and not having the King's Passport. He ought to have known that he could not pass. Isaac Heyman showed me a letter from his partner who says that he don't think he can get anybody to go to West Point and goods being scarce he might move the stock to Tennessee. Heyman does not approve of it and hardly knows what to do. He ought to staid at home at all hazards. Sterne, Phillip, Heyman and others have gone to Norfolk this morning. Moorefield sent me yesterday a copy of his paper. I saw a correspondence from the



West Point Guards in which are many printers mistakes. Having the idea of playing the gentleman occasionally I wish you would send me by next chance and only by chance two linen shirts and collars. The ladies in Norfolk wash and sew for us free of charge and the banks redeem all Georgia funds for the soldiers. I got plenty of money yet comparatively speaking, although I paid \$20.00 for a revolver. If I had not been on guard last night I would have gone to Norfolk.

Louis Merz

---

*Note:* Pvt. Louis Merz enlisted in the "West Point Guards" on April 26, 1861. He contributed articles to *The LaGrange Reporter*, Lagrange, Ga., under the pen name "Beauregard." The *Diary* of Pvt. Merz, kept while at Camp Jackson, Va., near Norfolk, in 1862, a gift to the Society by his niece, Miss Bertha Heyman, West Point, Ga., 96, was published in *Bulletin* 4, November 1959. Pvt. Merz was killed at the Battle of Sharpsburg, or Antietam, Maryland, on September 17, 1862.



Gosport Navy Yard, Va.  
May 17th '61

My Dear Ones,

I received your letter of the 14th this morning and thought I would write you a long letter tomorrow but we just received orders to leave the Navy Yard in the morning at 5 o'clock and encamp about 1-½ miles from here down this river. I think we have hardly time to write tomorrow and so I send you a few lines today. We are all well, doing fine, have plenty to eat and if every ball we have to fire would kill an Abolitionist I think we could get rid of them in about 2 days. Dock wrote an exciting letter. He did not know anything about the ammunition and supplies here. We received the first day 10 cartridges and 12 caps a piece and we were told not to fool them away because they were scarce and that was the reason the boys thought we had none. Now if every man was to fire his gun twice a day just for the fun of the thing, it would be a loss of about 20,000 balls and caps. Don't you see into it?

General Lee has arrived here this evening. We needed a Head, the Body was well enough but the Brains were lacking. Our mess had

for dinner today plenty of Pork, Bread, English Peas and fried chickens and also plenty of Syrup. Not a bit of Government eating. All from our own pockets except for corn meal for bread. Other companies not having funds may not be doing so well. What the sickness of the boys is you can easily perceive. There are some of them always sick about meal time, but just let dinner be announced and they are all getting better, and by the time meals are served they are all up. They are well then til about 5 o'clock in the evening, drill time again, and then some of them complain of headaches, fever, diarrhea and hard digestion. Moseley belonged to that class for about 4 days and when boys write home about others being sick they think you know all about it. Frank Reed wrote a letter home to Ben Cooper and if Frank cannot beat any man lying then I give it up. He wrote a right smart about me and made it a heap worse than it really is. I'm just enjoying myself because the days of men are few and I want to be as merry as long as I can, and when we get home again I make it all up. Duffey and Sam Cherry are on guard today. I do not know how the service will be after we move away from here. They are raising one of the sunken vessels today and some of our boys have been assisting in pumping water with fire engines. I cut the enclosed piece out of the *Richmond Dispatch* of today and the name being familiar I sent it to you. It is Morris Heyman.

The boys say we would have some fighting next Monday but I don't know how they got the news and it is strange that they have the day fixed. I think seeing Lee here makes them think so but it was necessary for somebody to come here and see into matters. John Miller is here appointed Quartermaster by the President. Col. Doles has also appointed a Quartermaster—screw loose somewhere. It is also whispered here that the President had appointed a Colonel, Lieutenant Col. and Major for our Regiment. Sterne is in town again and Friesleben received a letter from Long this morning. They all send you their best respects and I send mine, to Dr. Harrington, Brother Dickson, Pompey, Col. Whitner, Dr. Benham, Tate, Love, Williams, Messrs. Long, Robinson, Bradfield, Myhand, and all my friends.

Give a thousand kisses to little Helen and believe me to be yours truly

Louis Merz



Camp Jackson Va

June 6/61

Master A. C. Miller  
West Point Ga.

Dear Bro      Your kind & interesting favor of 20th ult came duly to hand & contents were perused with much pleasure. We are now about 14 miles from Portsmouth Va but still have our letters sent to Portsmouth care Capt G F Todd, 4 Regiment Ga Vols as before—Enclosed I send a map showing our position better than I could describe it. We are in a pine grove about  $\frac{1}{4}$  or  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile from the beach—about the same distance from Grimes Battery & almost 2 miles from Pig's Point—up to yesterday evening the entire force at & near this point was not more than 1,000 soldiers (on our Side). I understand the 3rd Regt. of Louisiana Volunteers are Pitching their tents on the opposite side of the Creek—near us in the direction of Pig's Point—I have also been told that the 3rd Regiment Ga Volunteers were going to move to some place near this point. This may be correct, or it may not be. We are in full view of Fortress Monroe about which place several of Lincoln's War Vessels can be seen all the time. Newport News which is occupied by some 5,000 of Lincoln troops can also be seen from here—from the Map you will see their position. We can not get to them as we have no War Vessels on our side at this place to meet old Abe's. Some of his are constantly passing to & from Newport News & from 1 to 3 stay anchored there all the time. Rumor says an Army will be marched down from Richmond Va on the other side of James River to drive the invaders from that side of the River—From here we can also see Sewell's Point on the other side of the Elizabeth River—about 7 or 8 miles from here. This is garrisoned by our troops & is the place where the "Monticello" was repulsed some 2 weeks ago. The "Harriet Lane" one of the War Vessels has several times steered up and down the water in front of our Camp, sometimes she would stop & the balance of the time go very slow. Her position being between Grimes Battery & the Battery at Pig's Point, always observing a distance a little out of the reach of our Guns until yesterday morning about 9 o'clock when she advanced up within about 2 miles of Pig's Point & commenced firing her Cannons at the Battery. This battery is man'd by a Va Corps the Portsmouth Rifles & although they were in a bad condition to fight—their battery not being complete yet they returned the fire & a constant firing was kept up for about 20 minutes. The ship shot 22 times & the Battery 38 making a total of 60 shots. The enemy shot fell thick all

round our men—one shell burst in the embrasures & another struck the muzzle of one of our cannons & cracked it so bad that it will not do to use—*yet nobody was hurt on our side*. It seems indeed that “God of Battles” is with us to keep our men from harm. Eye witnesses state positively that 3 shots struck the vessel & we do not know what damage was done but she turned “bout” & put back directly to Fortress Monroe. Our men shot at her several times after she commenced her retreat. I was at Grimes Battery & could see the flash of the enemy Cannon & I tell you it seemed to make my blood boil at the idea of Southerners being subjugated by Despots—who owe all they have to Southern labor. We have made them rich & now they attempt to reduce us to a position worse than abject slavery. I saw the water splash as shots from our battery fell all about the ship—several times I heard the report of our Cannon—without seeing where the shot fell. These I presume are the shots that struck the vessel. If they attempt to land here our men will fight like Tigers to whip them.

We are having as good fare as we could expect under the circumstances & as merry a set of fellows as you ever saw. My health is good, some of our members have the Measles & some have the Mumps. These are attended to closely & are doing very well. I am truly glad to learn the Crop of wheat is so abundant—I hope the Corn Crop will also be good. We will need a large supply of grain as we cannot now get it from the North. Experience should teach our people to become independent of the Northern fanatics.

Say to Pa he may lend 250\$ of my money to some reliable party at 7 per cent—perhaps Zachry & Walker may take it—reserve the balance subject to my order—give my love to all inquiring friends. This letter must answer as a reply to Carrie’s & whenever I write home I will write the letter for all. Say to Dinah I am much obliged to her for the cakes &c. If you cannot get work for Abe at his trade put him at anything else that he can get employment to do—In lending my money reserve the right to Call it in by Christmas. I wrote to Mr. Knowles & Sis about 3 weeks ago—but have rec’d no reply. I rec’d the Pkgs Shirts &c by Express. Nothing more but remain yours as ever

J. W. Miller

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Note: The “map” Pvt. Miller mentions is lost.



Wilder's Plantation (Va.)

1 mile from camp

June 14, 1861

Dear Heyman, Daniel and Betty,

Your letters from June 5 I have received last Thursday. I was just on guard at Post No. 3, when a messenger came to me and remarked that so many nice and good things had arrived for me in a trunk of I. Heyman's. I felt like going right straight after them but the evening before we were informed that if a man was found asleep on his post, or leaves his post without being regularly relieved *death* would be inflicted. Under such consideration, I thought it advisable to wait til my two hours were out, and then, *Veni, Vidi, Vici*. I came I saw and I liked it all. This was the second time I was fooled. Your bottles are most too light, Dear Betty, if you were to send them as you receive them, what a drunken time I might have had. But I am under a thousand obligations to you for the knife, fork and spoons. The cakes were excellent. I divided one on Thursday among a crowd and the other one was put on the table of Mess No. 4 on Wednesday last as dessert, Lt. Col. Mathews being our guest at dinner. The Lt. Col. is not a great friend of sweet meats, but he could not withstand a Bluffton 2-pounder and done credit to the task he undertook. The pickles, dear Betty, were excellent, and the cucumbers I looked at them again and again, believing discretion the better part of valor, I did not eat them, I admired them, but believing that my life belongs to my country, I was afraid to trust them. The cigars were relished as if a Zouave had got hold of them and such little luxuries are always welcome guests. The Pillow Miss Lina beats anything I have seen here yet, and I am a thousand times obliged to you for your kindness. I am here waiting on Bill Hulbert who I think will be able in a day or two to go back to camp. I spend day and night here but go back to camp to get my meals, hear the news and receive letters. When I went to supper last night I received your letters with one enclosed from home, which I read over and over again. I want to keep them here a while. I like father's spirit, he is trusting to the God of Battles and so are we. The Lord is on our side. You can see in the little battle at Pig's Point and at Bethel Church we had but very little loss. We heard every gun fired on Sunday evening, all day Monday, and even Tuesday, and from the movements on the other side, we knew that something was going on that did not suit them. We are drawing up a battery now that will give an account of herself some of these days. I was amused to hear from the Zouaves, why did you not act like they done in Atlanta? There the people acted heroic

and sent them to Decatur. Where were the W. P. Rifles, where the W. P. Cadets? So you belong to that crowd of Home Guards who never leave the place except when invaded? I admire the spunk of the Zouaves, they have a good name in Richmond, and if they were hungry, they had the natural right to feed themselves wherever they could. To fight a country's battle with hungry stomachs *can not be did*. In this house are only 3 sick men, Bill, one of the Sumter Light Guards, named Wilder, and Lt. Merriwether of the Glover Guards, both these men (excuse for calling the Lieutenant man) have the measles. Our host, Mr. Wilder is a very clever man, has a nice clever lady for a wife, and I cannot see how the gentleman could have voted for Breckinridge, but he done it, he told me so himself, it must have been an error of the head.

On Wednesday evening, two handsome young ladies were here on a visit, and I spent a couple of hours very amusingly. It is not often that we meet with such good luck, and savage looking as we are (we can beat the Zouaves all to smash) we think it a special favour if ladies converse with us, but I have a couple of shirts now and I will do the best I can. I wrote for some Sea Island shirts. I wish you would send them the next chance, also one pair of drawers with the names marked in full, ink will do. We done quit washing for ourselves and send our clothes to Portsmouth. For your own satisfaction, I send you the name of such who have been sick, and such as are sick. Scott, Cooper, Walker, James Hill, Lee James, Thom Traylor and Monk Reese have been sick but are nearly well enough to do duty. James, Young Traylor and Hogue are sick with the measles now but doing very well. This is all told. Some have a little headache occasionally but it dont last from one meal to another. I have, thank God, good health, and not had one sick hour since we left home. I hope you will not complain about not hearing from me, but you must be satisfied with two letters a week. I can appreciate the life of Washington, Daniel, but I do not believe that we must go barefoot because his soldiers had no shoes. Our officers hold their positions by our choice, his did not. They were mostly appointed by Congress and the men drafted. Yesterday was holiday, preaching at camp, Rev. Cunningham preached at a neighboring meeting house. I am obliged to you, Dear Betty, for your news from *Ledger*, Mr. Sterne (he went to Norfolk today) was also well pleased with it. If our letter has gone or not, I cannot tell you. I sent word to the North Carolina troops last Monday to inquire of the Abolitionists if the letter had gone or not, but they did not have time, the Lincolnites left Bethel Church before they could give an answer, but should I meet Mr. Lincoln then I will ask them and if he says No, then I shall deal

with *him* accordingly. Friesleben got a revolver, I saw the initials on it H. T. E. I almost can guess and I had no idea friend Eaton would part with such an old friend. I almost believe there is a chance to get him married off since he parted with that old revolver. If Friesleben was to get on a little canoe I actually believe he could bombard Fortress Monroe and demolish her.

News is now here, you have read the news from the fight before this, and for reliable news we generally read the *Richmond Dispatch*. Write to me soon all of you. Give my best respects to Colonel Whitner, Pomp, Dr. Benham, Mr. Shaefer, Dickson, Zachary and Walker, Bradfield, Clark, Atkinson, P. O. Harper, Dr. Harrington, Dr. Love, Mrs. Huguley, Uncle Henry Todd, Mr. Sharpe and family, W. F. Todd and lady, both Mr. Robinsons, Mr. Brown and all my friends. The boys here send all their respects to you, expecially my friend Bill Hulbert. Our company had a picket guard out last night 20 men. Thom Atkinson, as usual, was among them. Thom is mighty lucky in that respect. He gets a chance in all the work and he told me the other day, "I do all this cheerfully, not for the fun of it, but because I must." Thom is a sound philosopher. He has even learnt to get up at roll call in the morning and to go to bed at 9 o'clock. You see I am trying to fill the paper, and it is the very one you sent me. I like it because it is light, common foolscap costs 20c a letter. They dont knock off a bit for water. They are very scrupulous about the weight. Farewell to you all. Give a thousand kisses to little Helen. May the Lord preserve her. Rev. Cunningham is just trying a hard job. He is just trying to make a Christian out of Bill. Lost time sure. Bill looks serious and affected! Your brother

Louis Merz

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Note: Wilder's Plantation was about one mile from Camp Jackson, Va.



Guard Tent (Not Guard House) Camp Jackson (Va.)  
July 15th '61

Mr. Amos B. Huguley  
West Point, Ga.

Dear Sir and Friend,

I am on guard today, have just been relieved, and now have 4 hours of my own before I have to go up and down again for 2 mortal hours, seeing and watching that nobody comes and steals our regiment. I always thought this was very foolish because one man could hardly take the advantage of 1,000 and if 2 were to come, why Mr. Huguley you would not want me to fight a couple of them at the same time. But never mind, this is the order of Jeff Davis "his will shall be done." I thought of writing to you before this, but it was not in my power to do so, and the only excuse that I have is that I hardly know what to write about. But since I saw a letter from the "Ladies Relief Society" and was informed that Mrs. Huguley was appointed temporary president, I had no doubt left you were a Mr. President and it has always been my weak point to try to correspond with "big folks," and so I thought I would take the first opportunity to congratulate you and especially Mrs. Huguley, being confident that she fills the chair very well. Mr. Huguley, I presume you have seen some of my letters written to others, and found out that we are doing very well, have plenty to eat, and are waiting patiently for that slowest of all coaches, the paymaster. We are told every day that he will be here "tomorrow" and I almost believe that he will come some time between now and Christmas. But come he must, and surely he will bring us a pile. He owes us now \$43.00 and we will feel as rich as Croesus himself when we get it. Being on guard today is very pleasant, the weather is fine, and Lieutenant Merriwether, a kinsman of George Reese, is officer of the guard. He is a nice man, a real gentleman, and related to the major by marriage only. Many are the little incidents at the guard tent, there comes a negro, who hunts tent No. 2 in the Georgia Regiment, there comes one who complains that 3 white men had taken his wagon for a little use when is told by one of the guards that he must be mistaken because there were no white men here, only Master George Doles yellow boys. A green soldier wants to pass and is told that he must bring a pass signed by every corporal in the regiment. Some are reading Bibles, next to them are four men who seem not to hear, not to see, not to move, but at once you see a general stir among them like life itself was at stake. What are they doing? Why they are playing cards.



Yesterday was Sunday. According to the almanac I reckon it was, and now let me give you a description of how we celebrated. The drum beats at half past four when all get up and answer to their names. This is done I suppose to see if none of these patriotic volunteers have run away. Then some go to bed again growling and grumbling, having a faint recollection of Sundays spent at home. Next is breakfast, none of your chickens now, Mr. Huguley, none of your fried eggs, or nice butter. No sir. A little meat, lots of bread, a cup of unskimmed coffee, and sweetened with the brownest kind of sugar. At 8 o'clock is inspection of arms by the different captains of their respective companies and woe to the fellow who has an unclean gun. It would be an abomination in the eye of their august masters. At 10 we are called upon to attend Divine service, when Rev. Cunningham preached us an excellent, practical sermon. His theme was "the prodigal son," and would have done credit to a *sealed* meeting house. Our meeting house is God's Green Earth, its covering the blue, pure sky, and its walls are without end. Now we ought to have Sunday or Sabbath after all, but Colonel Blanchard, the acting Brigadier General, having his headquarters at Portsmouth, which must be a dull place on Sunday, comes to the conclusion that he ought to have a little fun himself, and he orders a review at 5 in the evening. The Louisiana Regiment joins ours at the appointed hour and then we have it from common time up to the Sappers for about 2 hours. Col. Blanchard seems to be satisfied, leaves without telling us goodbye, and we are marched back to our stalls, waiting for new orders. Our officers being only mortals themselves got tired and let us alone, resting themselves in their roomy tents, smoking their pipes, often filled by a private's tobacco. The chances for war are a great deal better now, than they were before, and if the storm breaks loose, we, our Regiment, will have plenty of bloody work to do; this is my impression, and I don't believe the day is very distant when that will be. The state of health in our company is excellent. We have none that can be called sick. A few still are lazy but such you find every where. The LaGrange Light Guards lost one man last night, with name Swindle I believe. His corpse will be sent home this evening. The Southern Rifles of Talbotton have one very sick man. There is nothing of interest here worth relating, only the trial of Captain Bladged which will last all this week. It is a prosecution by Colonel Wright and looked upon as malicious. I would feel flattered to hear from you soon. Give my respects to Mrs. Huguley, Mr. W. H. Huguley, both Messrs George Huguleys, Tom Nolan, Mr. Ross and their respective families. Should you have



any idea of spending the summer off from home, you would do well to come here, and nobody would be more glad to see you than yours truly,

Louis Merz

% Capt. George F. Todd  
4th Regt. Ga. Vol.  
Portsmouth, Va.

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*Note:* In early 1861, at West Point, Ga., a Soldiers' Aid Society was formed of sixty devoted and patriotic women, and the following officers were elected: Mrs. Mary Cobb Erwin, President; Miss Belle Lanier, 1st Vice Pres.; Miss Sallie Fannie Reid, Secretary; Miss Lucy W. Todd, Treas. Mrs. Erwin was a sister of General Howell Cobb, General Tom R. R. Cobb and Major John Cobb. First work of the Society was to make uniforms for the "West Point Guards," Co. D, 4th Ga. Regt. Inf. Vol., C.S.A., and the "Sallie Fannie Reid Guards," a Georgia coastal company. Throughout the war boxes of clothing, edibles, bandages, etc., were sent regularly. In T. Conn Bryan's "Confederate Georgia," (The University of Georgia Press, Athens, 1953) he states on page 175: "When the Soldiers' Aid Society at West Point learned one Saturday night that a company of forty men, without coats, would pass through the town on the following Monday morning, the women worked all day Sunday and had the coats ready for the men when they arrived."



Richmond va

August the 1st 1861

Miss Mary Hodnett

Dear Sister I embrace the present Moment to answer your letter which I received yesterday. This leaves me and the Boys well Mary I have a book to rite if I could rite it

I will commence about our trip from Decatur Ga here we left Decatur last thursday at nine we got to augusta at half past 6 an when we got there they had supper for 500 men we left at 8 we took 20 cars and two engines we went about 17 miles and one of them came loos and run a bout 2 miles and stoped the other pushed us on not knowing run against it and broke three or 4 cars but hurt no one at all We were in freight boxes went on to branchville from there to kingston from there to Wilmington from their to Weldon from there to petersburg from there to richmond we were 4 days and 3 nights

coming well since I have been here I have seen a heap day before yester day I was at Capt Norwoods Company I saw lea & eugene lea was well eugene has cut his foot one of his toes will have to come off he wont bee fit for service in a month Well Mary I have been a bout some in town it is the largest place I ever saw I have seen some oars boats here and steam boats all kinds of machines I have seen general scotts plantation & where he lived I believe that I will close

D. Mary they have between 8 and 12 hundred Yankeys prisoners here now I close nothing more at present only I remain your loveing Brother till Death  
John M. Hodnett

Post. We expect to go to Minasers to get armes I dont no when you must excuse these lines you must tell all the girls howdy for me it is reported that two of our company got killed but it it is a misstake Good by Tip will finish this



Sept the 1st 1861  
Jackson river Aligany County Va

Dr. B. F. Hodnett

Dear Brother I now seat my self to inform you that I have received yours and read it with the greatest of pleasure I never was as anxious to hear from home in my life as I was and to hear that you all ware all well generally I have been verry well since I rote last until last night the recroots came in and brought me some butter I et of it verry hearty it was too heavy on my stomache it caused me to vomit my stomache has been quite weak since

well to chance the subject I will tell you of our trip from Richmond here we war 3 days coming a bout 150 or 60 miles we expect to leave here to morrowe to go to general Floyd, about 85 miles west of here we will have to walk as we have road to the end of the road Well Benny if you will look at the map you can get a better description of it than I can give you we are among the aligany mountains they are plenty of dear here crops are generally good through this country I see some fine hoggs and cows and horses Well Benny Mary rote some thing about your coming to us I would bee very glad to see you but I can tell you this is a hard life Benny perhaps you all are mistaken

about us I understand it is reported there that we have had a fight and several of our regiment was killed it is a mistake we are not in 50 miles of the federal army but we are going under floyds command and I expect that we will be in a fight by the last of next week I will now close nothing more at present I remain your loveing Brother till Death  
H. H. Hodnett

Direct your letter to Richmond to the 13 Ga Reg as I showed you in the letter I sent by Curtright



Camp Whitfield Va. Sept. 15th 1861

My dear ones,

I received your kind letters through Morris and thought I would not write an answer, expecting I would be with you all in a few days, thinking that I would start tomorrow with Henry and Phillip, but when in the course of human events it becomes necessary to stay in camp, especially when Marshall Griggs gets sick, then it is right to give a reason why I cannot come to see you. I hope to be at home some time or other but I cannot say when and I assure you that I feel contented especially when I cannot help myself. Last Monday I told Mr. Peak goodbye and went to Camps where the boys were glad to see me. Double glad because I relieved one at least from guard duty. When the boys were drawn up to answer the roll call, it was a distressing sight to see only twelve of them answer to their names. Twelve out of 88 privates, the others are partly sick, partly detached as nurses. I went on duty Monday night and Thursday night our company had to furnish a Sergeant, and not having one ready or fit for duty, I was promoted to that position for one night at least, having 15 men from Camp Jackson under my command. I made a *powerful Sergeant*. Levi Sterne like others is sick and went to town, his brother following him to wait on him, on Wednesday night at supper I represented Mess No. 10 solitary and alone, and not used to eat that way I invited James Robinson to supper, Willy Hill, Corporal Greer and myself are the only ones from our mess fit for duty, while the other Greer, Hulbert and Pressley have gone to the hospital, none of them serious sick, only chills. Our boys went to the hospital in carts, waggons, ambulances. It was a distressing sight for me to see them shipped that way, but it was the only chance for them. There in the hospital they have all medical attention, nice

airy rooms, clean beds, good nurses, and not even a fly can be seen there. Frank Williams and Bob Collins are both in the hospital while Lloyd returned yesterday from there. As soon as they get well, they quit there in a hurry, not because the diet is not good, it is very good, but slim, and far between. I think Bill Hulbert wont stay long, he is too fond of good eating and lots of it. James Harwell has chills but he is getting over them. Pain Johnson went on duty yesterday. In short, Henry Lanier knows all the boys who are sick. I am enjoying very good health and am on duty almost every day. We furnish first eight men every night, now only six. We have no guard in daytime, but I suppose we will move over to Camp Jackson in a few days, and I hope our company will recover by that time. Corporal Heyman and Friesleben went to town last Thursday to celebrate the Day of Atone-ment while I remained in camp fasting and praying, while Lieutenant Croft hunted three stars for me last night. This morning we received a box of clothing from the West Point Ladies, and I had to take down the names of such as wanted and needed such. There are about thirty men in camp, the balance is absent. I received, Dear Betty, the cloth sent to me and with the exception of undershirts and socks and gloves I believe I have as much as I need, or rather can store away conveniently. The overshirts of Heyman are very nice. Please send my blanket by Henry or in the next box sent by the Ladies. The State of Georgia pays the freight if you turn it over to the Quartermaster General Foster in Atlanta. Darden told me he travelled with you. He is returning again not having been excepted, having a stiff arm. This letter I send by Askew who has been honorably discharged on account of disease. Is. Heyman told me that he was in Louisville, Kentucky, bought buttons there and made lots of money on them. He told me that Sam Cohen was there also and would visit you all on his return. Last Friday one of our little vessels came down the river and fired at Newport News, whenever she hit in about 4 miles, the boys would shake their heads, but when she stroke in about 2 miles they would holler. Dr. Hurst is going home, having been transferred to the 14th Alabama Regiment. 3000 additional troops are coming here tomorrow. Maybe an attack is expected here. Some say *we* are going to attack the Yankees, I do not know how, likely we wade through the river, or rather wait a while, but they say the mysterious looking *Merrimac* will play thunder with the fleet, or the *Patrick Henry* may come down and bombard Fortress Mon-roe. It will be a lively time then, and "he who is in battle slain will never live to fight again." I am now writing this letter while J. Robinson is attending to the same business. I saw a letter from Meyer in Albany stating that they are selling what they have for cash and no more. He alludes to M. H. Beringer in rather a strange way. I saw R—just re-



turned from LaGrange, who has been buying some goods in Knoxville at outrageous prices, especially shoes. I hope to hear from you soon again, and with the request to give my respects to Miss Lina and my love to the little girls, I remain, your brother

Louis Merz

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Note: Camp Whitfield was also called "Camp Folly" by "the boys," Pvt. Merz states in another letter.



Oct the 7th '61

Miss Mary Hodnett      My Dear Sister I have at last taken my pen in hand to answer your letter which I red with the greatest of pleasure Mary I have no great news Only I am well and in camps again Mary we are at such a mountain we were on one high point and the Yankeys on an other in sight of us but I suppose they found out General Lee was in command here Rosancrance says that he will not fight Lee any more Mary they stayed here in sight of us nearly a week and then retreated cavalry followed them they say that they have gone to Ohio

I expect we will go to Charlestown to take winter quarters Mary please send me two of the heaviest shirts you can find but Dont double them if you can send me one par of Woolen pants and one blanket we have not Drawn our money yet but expect to get it in a few days if I can I will send the money to pay for them I had the bad luck to lose one of my blankets when I had the measels Dr. Beasley is comeing to bring our uniforms if you can send them by him do it and you will oblige me very much We have had some frosts here and a little sleet we cant stay here much longer before we cant travel the roads are getting so bad that we cant hardly get provisions for so many we have in our army now about 12,000 men before we got here they had about 4,000 in both armies Mary we have not been in narry battle yet

Well to change the subject I will tell you something about the battle General Floyd fought on gauley river you heard of that battle rosancrance reported 2500 dead and 2500 wounded we taken some prisoners and that what they said

You said they were makeing up a company at Bethel to go down



on the cost of Ga and benny and sam had joined it I wish they would come up here and join this or that I could go and Join that though they would not bee any chance for me to go an Join that unless they would give me a commissioned officers place then they would bee a chance for it

I never thought of the socks one time though I will have all I can carry till we go into winter quarters and then I will rite to you how and where to send them give those girls all the compliments that is necessary and I will acknowledge them all You may tell the girls that I am getting to bee a verry good cook when I can get anything to cook I must close nothing more at present Only I remain your loveing brother till death

J W Hodnett

Direct your letter to Louisburg Va Evans Guards Company K 13  
Reg Ga Vols

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*Note:* This letter was written on small note paper, ladies' size, 6-1/4 x 5-3/16", folded. He wrote from Lewisburg, Greenbrier County, West Va. The "company at Bethel" mentioned is the "Sallie Fannie Reid Guards," a Georgia State six months coastal unit, organized in the Bethel Community, Troup County, near West Point, Ga., October 25, 1861. He wrote Mary twice October 7, 1861.



Camp Pelican Va  
November the 6, 1861.

Dear Brother & Parents I answer your kind letter that come to hand on the 3th with which I read with pleasure & also Jackson Sharp. I will get him to rite a part of my letter, with which will answer for us both to you all & his parents also. this leaves us in good health. I was truly glad to hear that you all was in the enjoyment of good health, & of the good meetings that had been in that vicinity. We haven't had the pleasure of facing the enemy face to face yet, but have been in three miles of Newportnuse three times & Lay in ambush waiting for the vandals to come, but they took care to keep back every time. I was along but they went a scouting party from our regiment too weeks ago, some from every company in this Regiment. They came across a fere they fired one round at them, they return the Fire and retreated. ours

taken one prisner & got a miny a musket, none on our side killed but one of the Ga. boys got shot through the leg. We killed too of theirs. I dont think there is any prospect for a fight on this peninsular soon but our Commander Gen Megruder must think so we have to drill three times every day, too company drills & one battalion, one every morning before sunrise & one at ten oclock & a battallion drill at three. it keeps us buisy what time we are not cooking & eating we are drilling. I received a overcoat & a cloak blanket from La. day before yesterday. I think I will have to send back some of my clothing when they come for I shal have more than I shal need but I will see when they come. I must close my letter Jackson Sharp will finish it when he comes offer gard. give my best love to Grandma tell her I shal not forget her, never  
No more but remain your Son  
Jesse C. Dormon

---

*Note:* The stationery of this letter is blue gray, lined and is a type of specially printed patriotic soldier stationery, size 13 x 7-5/8", folded in middle to make four sheets. A Confederate Flag, verse and "Confederate States of America" are printed at the top of the first page. The envelope bears the same flag and verse motif. The stationery was "Sold by J. W. Randolph, Richm'd," and the envelope is addressed to Pvt. Dormon's mother, "Mrs. Elmina Dormon, LaFayette Postoffice, Alabama, Chambers County, from Private J. C. Dormon 2nd La Volunteers Reg." In a note in this letter to his brother, Allen, he says: "Jackson Sharp have rote about the battle on the Potomac River. This war have made a man of me all that is likening now one moor years schooling. Allen I throsen aside all those boyish ways I used to have Allen you must escuse all mysstakes and handrite & give my best res'ts to all inquireing friends."



POEM

by 1326953

Pvt. Jesse C. Dormon

*Oh Father, dear Father for me do not weep  
For in Some foren mountain I expect for to Sleep  
For the dangeres of war I expect for to shear  
And for sick and death I expect for to bare.*

*You Mother dear Take your rest and sleep  
For your Kind advice I think I shall keep  
You tought me good things from boyhood to a man  
But now I am fighting for homes and Land.*

*From the bright Sunny South where in peace and content  
The years of my boyhood was carelessly Spent  
My Travels over this world Railroads and Streams  
Is ever dear to my memory Ive Seen in my dreams.*

*Now Dear Father & Mother this little poetry you see  
it come from your only Son thats in the army  
I hope when this you see satisfactory will be  
I have stood in batile every time and doging I am sum*

Composed by your umble Son, J. C. Dormon  
Co I 2nd La Reg 4th Brigade in Johnson's  
Division Youels Corps Lees Army

-----  
*Note:* This "Poem" was probably included with Pvt. Dormon's letter of November 6, 1861, mailed from Camp Pelican, Va., postmarked Williamsburg, Va. The following poem was printed at the top of the stationery, with flag having eleven stars, and "Confederate States of America," and may have inspired him in his poetic effort:

*On, on to the rescue, the Vandals are coming—  
Go meet them with bayonet, sabre and spear;  
Drive them back to the desolate land they are leaving—  
Go, trusting in God, you'll have nothing to fear.*

Of this poem, he wrote in pen at the side: *good portry*

Dec 1 1861

Near Sulpher Springs Va

Dear Father it is with pleasure that I seat myself to rite you a few lines to inform you that I am well and hope that theis lines may find you all enjoying the same blessing. I will give you a slight sketch of our campagn after the Yankes left Sewel Mountain. Floyd ordered his brigade to Cotton Hill about fifty miles from the mountain we remained on Cotton hill for tow weeks we Wer in plain vew of the enemys camps We had very heavy canonadeing for ten days but it don no damage at all; we was on picket dewty for three days and nights in the rain and had nothing to eat but beef and bread once a day and some of us was bair footed and raged at that time Mr. Cutright came up at that time with our cloathes and in a few days after he left us We had a fight in the evening between three and four oclock, we lost one man and tow wounded one of them belonged to our regiment, our company never figherd a single shot on the account of their guns reaching so mutch farther than ours We was on the extreme left of the regiment, so we had to conceal our Selves in the woods while the balls woud fly like hail over our heads fer an hour I was a little frighten at first when we first opened figher and when I thought that we was in about fifty yards of the enemy we was commanded to halt and put on our beyonets and lay down on the ground, so we expected that the first thing would be a charge but we soon found out that it was our men at the foot of the hill When if we had have figherd on them we would have towern them all to peacies for we was in about fifty yards of them and had the advantage of the hill; So when we found out that it was our men that we was about to figher on; we fell back behind the hill to conceal our selves from the yankeys; So as to wait for them to advance on us, and then we would have given them a desparrat blow for we was in about fifty yards of the road, but we was in a very dangerous position if our force had have retreated without notifying us we would have been compleatly surrounded; for we was wheir we couldent see what was going on at all, but in sted of advancing, they retreated at the rates of tow forty, in about half an hour after their retreat we was ordered back to camps and when we got their we heard that the Yankes was coming in behind us to cut off our supplyes and attact us in frunt and behind, so the orderes was then to pack up evry thing and retreat back to Roughly about twenty five miles from Cotton hill We hardly had time to get our suppers before we had to strike tents, and then we had no transpotation for tents nor cooking utensials so we had to wait untill tow Oclock for transpotation and had non so we was compelled to burn our tents provissions and cooking utensials

and a great menny cloathes; we marched from then untill the next evening without anny thing to eat and the mud was from Shoo mouth to nee deep and when ever we got anny thing to eat we had to cok it in the ashes, but it was verry seldom that we ever got enny thing at all; The Yankeys persued for fifteen miles it was reported that their was seaven thousan in our camps; the secont morning after we left Cotton hill we had left camps about three hours before they come up our Calvary figherd on them for half an hour they killed severall of them and lost one Colonal by the nam of Crones and had tow or three privates wounded; they folowed us some six or seaven miles we woud have stoped and fought them but we had onely tow thousan men; and I beleive that Fleoyd was the skeered worst than enny other man in the regiment; our fair was verry hard when we got to Roughly we remain- ed their for nerley a week and the ground was covered with snow and we had now tents and but one ax to the company our company is stationed at the Springs as guards for the sick the regiment has gon on from hear to take up winter quarters; but I now not wheir they will stop, our company will leave here as soon as the sick is aighble to travel we are now in good houses and have plenty to eat John rote me to let you know wether I got those Clothes that was sent by Frank Cutright I received one blanket socks and over coat and tow towels, and one pair of boots and some salt and coffey and tow towels and some paper by Samel; I have plenty of clothes for the present This leaves me and John and peater Leslie well. I am coming home on furlow if I can get it. Nothing more at present Your son

H. H. Hodnett

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*Note:* This letter describes action at Cotton Hill, West Virginia. The Hodnett family lived at Long Cane, Troup County, Ga. The father of the Hodnett brothers was William Collier Hodnett, and their mother was Miss Caroline Finley before her marriage. Some letters are addressed to their sister, Miss Mary Hodnett, and others to their sister, Susan Hodnett Stephens (Mrs. W.A.). Several of the brothers and their cousins were in service. Long Cane is near West Point, Ga.





Atlantic Hotel, Norfolk, Va.  
December 10th 1861

My dear ones,

I have received your letter by Phillips and was glad to see you were all well. Bill Hulbert was much pleased with his present and requested me to give you dear Betty, his thanks, with the observation that he would not do like one, but only wear his fine shirt on Sunday or if he should happen to be corporal of the guard. Capt. Todd went to town Saturday, went to the hospital, and found Dick Harden very sick. He requested me yesterday to go there and visit John Christian. I done so. Arrived at the hospital yesterday at noon, found Harden in the most critical situation. He knew me and I gave him medicines till last night at 9, when I done the last act that one man can do to another in this world. I closed his eyes, had him dressed in his uniform. Such is life, full of misery and misfortune. His corpse may arrive in West Point with this letter. John went to camp this morning to report. Coming here this morning, I met your cousin Sam Meyer, dear Betty, who shipped a part of his stock here. I just saw Walter Christian who told me Ropper was in camps and Mrs. Ropper was upstairs here. As soon as I finish this letter I shall visit her, I may stay here tonight, I cannot tell. Henry and Phillip will be in town today and I shall wait for them. We have no sick men in our company now. Daniel is still in the hospital but is well. Last Saturday we moved in our new house and slept well and comfortable. May the Lord be merciful on us and not aggrieve any more by striking such heavy blows as we have received in the last six days. Should you have any chance please send one knit old shawl for coat lining. I think half of it might be enough. Give a thousand sweet kisses to little Helen and Jennie, and write soon again to your affectionate brother, Louis Merz.

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*Note:* "Little Jennie" Heyman was born August 6, 1861 to Heyman and Betty Merz Heyman in Bluffton, the Chambers County part of West Point, Ga., which later became Lanett, Ala. She married Zach Hagedorn in 1883, and is the mother of eight daughters and a son. Mrs. Hagedorn lives in Montgomery, Ala., where she celebrated her *100th birthday on August 6, 1961*. Friends of the West Point area sent 100 red roses for the occasion. Her sister, Miss Bertha Heyman, lives in West Point and is 96. "Little Helen" Heyman married Morris Herzberg in 1877, and died in 1942, aged 82. She was the mother of four sons and two daughters, of whom Miss Fannie Herzberg, living in old Bluffton, and Harold Herzberg, LaGrange, Ga., survive.

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Camp Jackson Va

Feb 8th 1862

Mr. J. L. Lovelace

Dear Brother, As some of the boys are going to leave for home tomorrow, and thinking you are all like myself, anxious to hear at any time; I shall answer your letter of the first by T. J. Atkinson who arrived in camp yesterday looking well. There is some news of interest here today. We have just received news of an attack on the Roanoke Island by the Yankees which proved to be a failure after an engagement of several hours, also the fall of Fort Henry. We had a very fine address from Col. Geo. Doles a few days ago on the subject of re-enlisting; there is going to be a strong effort to reorganize the Regt, there are many that will not re-enlist and many that will, as for myself I am in for the war for there is no use of quitting the field until we whip or are whiped which I think will never be the case.

I am glad that you are getting on so well with your business and hope you may succeed well and not have to quit on account of the war. Though it is a bad chance for me to do any thing at this time in the way of making a start for after life, yet I want all of my relations and friends to be doing well so they may be of some aid to me when I shall start out to obtain the goal. The weather is very bad at this time, it has been raining for several days and no prospect of its quitting. My health is very good. I was glad to get the things you all sent me. I do not know which to prize most, for the boots will do me great service in cold weather and my cap will be fine to keep the wind from freezing my ears when I am out on the beach and the cake will be fine to eat when I feel like taking a lunch. My thanks to all for them, my love to Jimmie for the cap and Babe for the cake, tell them I will send them something by some one and Lady also, or bring them a present when I come. Let me know what my boots cost and who made them.

Tell the Esq. I will write to him according to promises and that I had a rainy night last night, but did not get on post 14, but on the 2nd relief and post 4. Write to me soon. Tell sister Mollie I would be glad to receive a letter from her. My love to all the family.

Your brother, L. T. C. Lovelace

---

*Note:* Camp Jackson, Va., was near Pig Point, on Hampton Roads, so there was

a "beach." The reference to "Esq." is to 2d Corporal George F. Traylor. Appointed Ensign in 1861, he was discharged, over-age, August 18, 1862. At the time of this letter he may have been home on furlough and could appreciate the difference between "Post 14" and "2nd relief, Post 4," on a rainy night. He was also Pvt. Lovelace's brother-in-law.

◆ ◆ ◆  
Camp Caustons Bluff

feb the 15th 1862

Dr. B. F. Hodnett

Dear Brother I have at last seated my Self to answer your kind letter that I received a few weeks since and read with pleasure I would have riten sooner but did not have paper & have been verry busy too building our batry We have to work half of every day on till 11 oclock some nights we are looking for the yankeys evry day now of the spring tide it will last next week if they dont come in that time they will not bee expect to come at all this Spring they are about 20,000 on wassaw island they are trying to burn skidaway bridge but I don't think they can succed at it I think our cost soon will be saft if they dont attack us in 4 or 5 days we are puting up a battery on the saint augustine creek we have 5 pieces 1, 18 lb 2, 32 1, 64 1, 10 inch mortar for battry

we can see the yankeys mast poles on their vesels I have no other news of importance I here too that they are geting the best up the country but I hope that we will whip them yet I see some seem to bee geting in dispair but the sayin is the darkest hour Just before day I dont think they can whip us nor shant un till it is done

well to change the Subject I saw the boys yesterday they are all well and doing well Sam looks a little pale yet but he is at work they are 2 miles a bove us James will bee down here to morrowe Benny we have not drawed any money since November but will draw Monday I think I will have to pay for some things that I got from the government this tim and if I can spair any I will send it home comeing from Va and 3 or 4 days after we got here cost me a bout 15 Dollars We stayed in savannah we drawed provisions but no Wood



and we couldnt cook These lines leaves me well as common I weigh 156½ lbs nothing more at present only remain your Brother till Death

John W Hodnett

you must write soon and give me all the news

-----  
*Note:* This letter is written from Carston's Bluff, near Savannah, Ga. The "skid-away bridge" connected the mainland and Skidaway Island.



Camp Jackson Va

February 18th 1862

My dear ones!

The enemy has not advanced on us yet. We are still idle but are fixing up a little for our defense. The *Merrimac* is finished and will be out this week. All newspapers are to the contrary notwithstanding. We had a great deal of rain here lately, but today the sun is shining again. The news from Fort Donelson has so far been cheering, and the mail this evening will bring us the final result. Capt. Morgan, Commissary of this Regiment, returned last night from Georgia, and reports Governor Brown calling for twelve regiments to take our place and to fill up the quota for Georgia. I was on picket guard last Thursday and on police (camp guard) last Saturday. The weather was unpleasant cold. Just now two flag of truce boats came over from Fortress Monroe, supposed to bring our prisoners from Roanoke Island. Don't know. Our company has just received five carts of wood, enough to last about five days. I saw Ropper yesterday, he reports his family well. Last Friday we were paid off, but \$25.00 of our money was deposited in the bank to wait the action of Captain Todd, a very foolish way of doing business in the present situation of Norfolk. I send enclosed \$20.00. Please take care of it. Pink Lyon wants a pair of shoes like those of James Morris brought by Thomas Atkinson, No. 7, and if the buttons could be a little lighter, he would prefer it. Please send them by Bledsoe or Cherry or Harrell or Harkness. I am looking for Col. Matthews tomorrow and likely Capt. Todd will be along. Please write me as soon as you get this,

and give a thousand kisses to little Helen and Jennie, from your affectionate brother  
Louis Merz

PS Please send me the price of the shoes. I think those of Morris were \$3.50.



Camp Causons Bluff  
feb the 21st 1862

B )  
B B ) Miss Mary Hodnett  
B )

Dear Sister it is with pleasure that I seat my self this evening to answer your kind letter these lines leaves me in good health and hope they may reach you all injoying the same blessing Mary I think we have Savannah pretty Safe now we are getting well fortified on the river the yankeys are in site yet but Dont come any closer to us they Shoot at our boats some times passing to Skidaway and back but they are too far off to hurt them it is wasting their ammunion We have blockaded all the creeks and river and got bateries all a bout on the river

We hear no talk of our leaving here yet but I expect we will go to Kentucky this Spring if we leave here Mary you wrote to me about Thomas Stephens beeing Dead I was verry sorry to hear of this Death I thought as much of him as any new acquaintance I ever have formed and no doubt but he was a good solgier I taken him to be a clever man he has paid the debt we all have to pay sooner or later excuse these lines as I am in a hurry tell all the girls howdy and give them my respects to Mollie and Sis especially

Nothing more at present only I re main your Brother till Death

J. W. Hodnett

---

*Note:* From Carston's Bluff, near Savannah, Ga. The meaning of the four B's, in large and fancy script at the beginning of this letter is not known. "Skidaway" refers to Skidaway Island.

Camp Jackson, Va.

March 31st 1862

Dear father,

I received your kind and welcomed letter of the 23rd in due time and was glad to hear from you, as it is always a great pleasure to me to hear from home; and to know that you are all well. My health is very good at this time, and I am getting on finely in the capacity of a soldier. There is no news worth relation. We are all looking every day when the *Virginia* will make her appearance to give the yankees another whipping. There is a very large fleet at Old Point at this time and she would have a plenty to do if she was out; but I learn that they are fitting her up better than she was before, she is to have a new armament, one gun carries a 360 pound ball shell pointed. I think she will be able to sink or capture the *Monitor* next time, as they have fixed grappling irons on her. There will be several other gun boats out with her.

We are expecting every day to hear when we will be mustered out, but at present there seems to be but little prospect of such a thing as congress is trying to keep all between the ages of 18 & 35 in and the most of us will be included in that no. Some are very much dissatisfied with the idea of being kept here, but if it is the best, I shall be willing to stay; for I want to do every thing that will aid our cause on. I would be glad if it were so that I could be at home to assist you with your business, but at present I see but little prospects of staying at home long, if I get there at all. Brother James must assist you as much as he can, and with his assistance, you must do the best you can, as you see the condition of our country, and it needs every one to swell the ranks of our armies it can get. Nothing would be more gratefying to me than for the war to cease with us having obtained our independance, but it is too late for us to ever think of anything but fight it through, and if the worst must come, then there will be no other alternative but to submit; yet I trust that a greatful providence will guide our arms to victory, and independence, if needs be; by the blood of all who are able to take up arms, to strike a blow for their liberty.

You wanted to know my notions about the ladies; I do not know exactly how to answer your question, as I have so many about them, but in regard to the point you were alluding to, I have no notion at this time unless I could make a trade that would pay exceedingly well, and

then of course I should ask your advice; and always willingly take advice from those who I think capable of giving it. Let me know brother Samuel's address. I want you to write to him often and advise him about doing right. I shall try and get with him when I join any other Company so that we may be together. My love to all. Write me soon. Your son  
L. T. C. Lovelace

-----  
*Note:* Though Pvt. Lovelace, and the other volunteer troops of the spring of 1861, were hopeful of being "mustered out" on expiration of their twelve-months service in the spring of 1862, the Confederate Congress passed the first Conscription Act on April 16, 1862, declaring every white man between the ages of 18 and 35 subject to Confederate service. He, like many other loyal and experienced troops, reenlisted for the war.



Camp Jackson, Va

April 13, 1862

My dear ones,

I received your dear letters yesterday evening and was glad to see you all back safe at home, the best place in the world for married people, especially such that have families. Then the children won't bother nobody, they being no botheration at home. Last Friday, after three days being look for, the *Virginia* made her appearance in the Road in company of seven gunboats. What a navy! They moved about all over the waters and at their first approach, you ought to have seen the stampede among the Federal shipping. They all left their places and stopped below Fortress Monroe where they lay quite safe, even the *Monitor*. The great Federal *Chisholme* put herself under the protection of the Federal guns and nothing was left for our navy but two brigs and one schooner, which were taken care of and safely landed at Norfolk, loaded with hay. Yesterday the *Merrimac* came out again and stopped near Sewell's Point Battery, remained there until in the evening and then returned to Norfolk. What does it all mean? Where is the great Lincoln gun with its Lincoln pills weighing 437 lbs a piece? It must be a Federal lie or a humbug, but why did the *Virginia* not attack the fort? Because she had orders not to run any risk, being intended for the defense of Norfolk. Old Tatnall is not scary, he assembled his men and told them he would carry them to victory or h..l.



What did the men say? "You are the very chap we have been looking for." 75 Mississippians were along to board the *Monitor*. They were armed with pickaxes, turpentine, chloroform and other dangerous smell stuff. This morning while I am writing, the *Monitor* has ventured out a little, but the *Virginia* has not come out yet. On Friday evening the *Virginia* only fired 2 shots. The great victory at Shiloh has gratified us a great deal, and the reported death of Buell (I don't believe it) has created some excitement in camp, while all are sorry that we have lost one of our best generals. McClellan is on the peninsula trying his own to Richmond "from this part of the world." Magruder is a hard case and that hardest of all the hard cases, Joseph E. (not Brown) Johnston has out-generaled the young Federal Napoleon and has already sent reports says 60,000 men to Magruder's aid. Johnston and Magruder are working hand in hand and Mc will find Jordan a hard road to travel. The boys are nearly all well. Phillips had a few chills, but is on guard today, for which I am very sorry, then tomorrow will be my guard day. The boys are not in the best of spirits owing to a little Conscription Bill that has passed the Senate and is under consideration before the House. Some believe that it will not pass the House, and Senator Ben Hill says so, but I rather think it will and ought to pass. How it will affect the 12 months groups I don't know, not having the feature of the bill, but if Congress sees proper to keep us here, why then all right. It is better to call out an efficient force and terminate the war at once than to call for volunteers for the next five years. I am ready to make any sacrifice asked for and necessary, having been here now 12 months I would prefer a change to another place. Willy Hill fixed up a box to send home yesterday and encloses seeds to be forwarded to you, but the box was returned last night on account of all the Express now being pressed into the Militia. I think this is only to bluff Huger but I don't think they will succeed. Dear Daniel your compliments respecting my *Schriftstellerkunst*, we had blows and I cannot afford to waste my time any more. I worked hard and labored two hours on that letter, and this is my reward. Is it? Ha! ha! ha!

Camp News is none of any importance. Lt. Hill is still on the court-martial, and owing partly to the state of weather, and partly to the *Merrimack* excitement, we have not had a drill since last Friday a week. The Georgia 2nd Battalion, Major Hardeman, will leave Goldsborough on the 14th inst. for home, *Monday morning the 14th*. Yesterday evening, I went to Mr. Wilder's with Hulbert, stayed to supper, and went to camps after sundown. This morning went on guard. Today is the anniversary of Fort Sumter and the company flags are displaying from the different quarters—no drill—good excuse. What is Fort Pulaski



doing? I am afraid to hear from there. Please write me soon again and believe me to be yours truly

Louis Merz.

My best love to Helen and Jennie. Just heard from the surrender of Pulaski and Island No. 10. Tomorrow is *Pesach*.

-----  
Note: See *Diary* of Pvt. Merz, *Bulletin* 4, for more on the *Merrimac* and *Monitor*.



Bethel Springs Tenn  
April 24, 1862

Mr. & Mrs. L. B. Lovelace  
West Point Ga.

It is with sadness I inform you of the death of your dear son Samuel. He was taken violently sick three days ago, all thought it was measles but from the malignity of the disease I think it was Typus Fever. I wrote you the day he was taken sick and on yesterday I sent you a dispatch stating he was quite sick with measles, but then I thought he was some better, after that a scorching fever came on him which lasted until six o'clock this morning when he died. He was conscious all the time & expressed a willingness to die. If I was well I would write you fully about his character & sickness. I can safely say I never knew a better boy than Saml. Lovelace, a Christian & Gentleman in all his intercourse with every one. He had not been with us but a few days until he got the title of the "Best Boy in the World"—every thing that could be done for him was done. I will send his books to you. I mourn with you in this terrible bereavement, as soon as I get able will write you fully. Your friend

J. C. Curtwright

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Note: Capt. Curtwright commanded Co. E, 41st Regt. Ga. Vol. Inf., Army of Tennessee, C.S.A. His letter informs the parents of the death of their son, Samuel LaFayette Lovelace, Private, March 4, 1862, Troup Light Guards, Troup County, Ga.; Co. E, 41st Regt. Ga. Vol. Inf., Army of Tennessee, C.S.A. Pvt. Lovelace died at Bethel Springs, Tenn., April 24, 1862.

Dear Sister I recon when you get this you will think I am going crazy or something I write so much It Does seem like I want to write a letter every Day but I dont get many from home my intention for writing to Day is I want you to make mine an Sams uniform for us We did not get the uniforms they spoke of before I left I cant tell the reason why it was but they have gotten some roswell cloth from the factory to make them of we have had our measure taken and sent to LaGrange to Forbs to bee cut the thread and buttons will bee there too as for the triming I dont no how it will bee the pants I surpose will have a blue cord Down the seam of them the coat I surpose you can get a patron of it I cant tell you when to send after it exactly I dont no when the cloth will get there but by the time you get this it will bee there I recon every thing is paid for our clothing money is there to pay for it Well Mollie to change the subject we hear this morning our men are fighting in richmond Va now and Driveing the foe back a gain to ard their own land a gain the loss is great on both sides I think we will gain the victory at last we have not heard from Jackson in a few Days but he is Doing his part no Doubt of that he is in Mariland Destroying the enemies railroads and taking them as he goes the last account of him he was on the baltimore and ohio rail road we surpose he was going to Baltimore he is the first to invade the enemys soil perhaps they will find out how the invasion feels and quit our land and bee wiling to make peace like whitefolks I think they had better Do it while their names are up or my notion is they will get badly whiped yet for the last few days they have been Defeated on every side on land and water we had two guns of flying artillery whiped two gunboats the other Day in South Carolina It seems that providense is on our side then again we look at our people and it seems that people coud not bee any worse than ours then it may bee like Abrahams case in asking the lord to spair sardom and Gomarowe though they were Distroyed he may Spair us for a few he said he spaird them for a few I think we have some good people in our leed I hope we may gain the victory at last and our people may return to their homes with great Joy and live in peace Well Mary I am on the sicklist from a mosquito bite they have bit me lots but it is the worst I ever had it is worse than the rising I had when I went home it is on my left rist my arm is swollen half way to my elbo Sam is sorter sick brother Jef is on picket to day and wont get back till 12

oclock to morrowe he is well Tip is well and all the boys from our settlement I will close I remain your loveing brother till Death

John W. Hodnett

Ps My love to all Here is some stamps



May 3, 1862

Dear Sister I seat myself to Drop you a few lines which will inform you that we are all well at present and hope these lines may find you all enjoying the same blessing Mary we have been fighting 8 days and some in the night we got one man wounded the first Day none since then have ben several of them gored Down by shells but none hurt We have lost severel in the Regiment I recon we have lost 250 killed wounded and missing we have run the yankeys to their gun boats now we are going to leave here I cant tell where we will go from here I hope we will go to Tenn

Mary I hant got much to write to you if I could see you I could tell you a heap I have walked over and a round Dead men un till I Dont mind it at al I recon they are 500 on this field now not buried a bout a mile from here they are as many more not buried on the first battle field we stayed 3 nights and two days it become very offensive before we left it So many Dead horses and men It will take 3 or 4 Days to bury the Dead the most of our men are buried now but they lots of Yankeys yet Well to change the subject I havent seen my napsack in over a week I am the Dirttest felowe you ever saw I recon we had to wade the Dust half Shoe mouth Deep and sleep in it beeing wet with swet we turned the coler of the Dust and no soap to wash liveing on crackers we are 25 miles from our napsacks now my bible was so large I had to leave it but I got a Yankee testament and kept it

We have got lots from them we got over 200 horses and guns enough to arm the balance of the men in the Southern Confederacy Spring field muskets and rifles and every kind of gun you could mention one place we got 9 wagon loads of ammunition

Well Mary we are nearly reddy to start some where now and I must hasten We are nearly worn out traveling so much and so hard I

hope we will get to rest some now before we have to fight any more  
you must write as soon as you get this Direct your letter to Richmond  
Lawtons Brigade and it will come to me whare ever we are we have  
no I Dea Where We will go We have to guess and wait and find  
out Mary I have had another very bad rising on my right hand but  
it is getting well You must excuse these lines I am in a hurry I have  
to start soon give my Love to all and receive a Large portion for your  
Self nothing more at present I remain your Brother till Death

John M. Hodnett

Ps the Boys from the Settlement are all well

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*Note:* This letter is written partly with pencil and pen on what is likely to be captured Yankee stationery. Across the top of the first page are the words, "The Nation's Defense," and underneath is a fast galloping squad of cavalry, their horses raising much dust. All are charging and the men hold their sabres erect with the exception of the leader who is pointing forward with his sabre. The printing is in blue. The letter is from Virginia and it is the time of General Jackson's first Shenandoah Valley campaign.



Corinth Miss May 3/62

Mr. & Mrs. L. B. Lovelace

Dear Friends, I sent you a dispatch about the death of your dear son at the time all our Co. was sick but 20 men and all were ordered sick to be carried to Columbus & Lauderdale Springs. I was sick at the time & was ordered with the sick to see them safe. I have just returned & am worn out, the sick were 5 days on the road without food & water most of the time and no medical attention, the consequences was about 50 of the Regt died & many I left very sick at Lauderdale, our trials are too distressing for me to attempt to describe & with your heart saddened by the death of your son I know you can't enjoy it.

I could not send the remains of Sam home. The R. Road was completely blocked up & I had him buried in Bethel, Tenn, the spot marked so I can get there when all this unholy strife is over & send to you. As I wrote you before, I done everything for your son I could do & as much I could for a brother. Nothing would save him, he

died happy and a Christian. I have just returned & hasten to write you the cause of not sending him home. Yours truly,

J. C. Curtwright

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*Note:* Lucius Beall Lovelace and wife, Obedience Robinson Lovelace, lived in Troup County, near West Point, Ga. Their four sons, James L., John T., Lucius T. C., and Samuel L., were in Confederate service. James L. and John T. were killed in battle; Samuel L., died at Bethel Springs, Tenn., April 24, 1862. Captain Curtwright wrote this letter to the parents, as well as the letter of April 24, 1862, notifying them of the death of Pvt. Samuel L. Lovelace.

The stationery of this letter has a picture of John C. Breckinridge under an eagle in the upper left hand corner. Below the picture is the inscription, "President, John C. Breckinridge, Vice President, Joseph Lane," with a quotation of Breckinridge, "The Constitution and Equality of the States."



Miss Susan C. Jones

LaGrange, Geo.

In care of Joseph Boyd

Corienth Mississippi

May 20th 1862

Dear Sister

I take my pen in hand this evening to inform you that I am well and doing verry well at this time. I hope thease few lines may find all well and doing well, being that I have a good chance to send you a letter I concluded to write you one tho thear is several on the way that you have not got yet this make 4 that I have written since I have Rec'd any from you I would like to hear from you again tho Mr Reid arrive hear last evening he toald me that you all were well He toald me that he saw Father and John in LaGrange a few days ago I want you to write to me as soon as you get this letter and let me hear how many letters you have got from me I think that I have sent you about twenty letters since I left Camp McDonnald or maby more I want Brother to stay at home for I think that he has no bisness going to the war and tell Brother Columbus if he has got twenty schoolers the Law will not compell him to go Capt Curtright ses that Brother John must stay at home Sister I send twenty dollars to you witch you



can ceap it and use it when you want it I send it by Mr. Reid he ses he will send it to you I have got sixty five dollars left I think it will be as much as I want at the preasant time You can take the twenty & ceap it If I should get sick I mite nead it. You nead not to read all this to Mother if you dont want to dont let everry boddy see theas letters You can take as much of the Forty dollars and spend is much of it as you want. To bee shure I will write about what I have sed before this I have wrote to you before to by you and Mother a bed stead one apease and be if you can get them on good terms I think you can get them from Keno as cheap as any whear elce. I know you have allways bin saying that you would like to have a nise bed stead. I want you to be shure to by yourself and Mother one The money may die & theay wont

If I should die or get killd in battle all that I am worth I want Father & Mother to have it and you and John The Yankeys and our pickets are fiteting every day and Night nearley that comes I do not know how long it will bee before the great battle will be faut ours is getting now to whear theay wil fite I think you can hear more about the war than I can I want Brother John to By me a good hat one that will fit him and I know it will fit me We cant get any hats hear what few is hear in Corenth aire worth ten and fifteen dollars every-thing is hie hear I want a tooth breash two You can send them by some one that is comeing hear Send me some kneedles two and cushion to put them in I must close Your affectionate Brother until Death God be my helper

J. H. Jones

P S Sister I had the best dinner to day that I have had in a long time We had rosted potatose for dinner I never did live is hard in my life

J H J

P S Send me Unchels little testament

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*Note:* Pvt. Jones lived at Jones Cross Roads, Troup County, Ga., about ten miles from West Point, Ga. His parents were Mr. and Mrs. Christopher Columbus Jones, pioneer residents of the community.



Camp Belcher Va. May 24th 1862

My Dear ones!

Before this letter leaves here I hope Daniel has arrived at home & given you his short experience as a soldier & a soldier's life. In fact he had a good opportunity to form some idea of our regiment & seeing many incidents too numerous to mention. He can tell you all about it. Most of the boys were sorry that Daniel had to leave & none more than Capt Todd but Dr Philpot assured me that he was compelled in justice to the Confederate Government to reject him on account of his eyesight & has given him a certificate to that effect. On Thursday evening General Huger honored us with his presence on dress parade & of course Col Doles made a show as Col Doles only knows how to make it. The General stayed til the parade was over & expressed himself highly gratified & even made the remark that the 4th Geo was the best regiment in the service. On Friday morning we struck tents marched through Petersburg, knapsacks on, band playing & colors flying; the natives seemed to be astonished at such a display—but of course the papers have to be mute on all such. On we went, marched about 5 miles & halted at the place about 3 miles from the city 19 miles from Richmond,  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile from the R. R. Two of our Companies are on picket duty Col Matthews commanding As soon as those Companies are relieved the Toombs Vol & W.P.G. will go on picket where shots with the Yanks are exchanged every day. Yesterday we received orders to cook rations for 3 days & keep them on hand, be ready to march at a moments warning; tents & knapsacks also sick soldiers will be left here nothing but a blanket to be carried along, so that the army of the Appomattox can participate in the great battle of Richmond which is to come off at no distant day. Such is the language accompanying the above order & significant it is that the 5th Brigade will have a showing at last. When ever the battle of Richmond comes off you may hear some stirring news; the idea is to conquer or be subjugated, to die as free men or live as slaves. "Fight we must & fight we will." The destiny of the country lies in the hands of the soldiers & no stone must be left unturned to achieve a victory or die in the attempt. The boys are nearly all well, Ed Sharpe is in Camp & looks very well. News is none here, our camp is nice level place with a row of shade trees on the left used by the 10th Co as a cooking place like usual. Write to me soon; I forgot to mention that our wash came in Daniel night you left. Direct your letters to Petersburg. Give my respects to all my love to dear Helen & Jenny & believe me to be your affectionate brother

Louis Merz

June the 14 1862

Dear Sister i embrace this opportunity to write yo all how we are getting along. brother Jefferson I an John an Jo Moor are well i hav taken a coal leeving a rite smart couff a lital hedache i reseaved your leter the da that we left Savanna a bout 10 minets before we got on cars i never had the chans to read it untell i got on the cars an for those things you told us to send to brother ben I haven seen the shirt or the bucket we lost it while we wer at Mack es point i judge before we left i sent a pair of pants an a cuver led by ex press they are with Me and Tip an Jack Wise an John Camron We told Wyht it wood be bes to send them Well no nuse to rite that is worth yore attention only the death of Jaimes Cline he was killed by the cars about 15 or 20 miles from golds burrow between there an Wilmington he never die there but they stop cars and run back to whair he was an taken him up he lived a bout 2 hours booth leg wer cut off his rite was mashed a good gash was cut in his hedd he was considerabley bruised he must a fell from the end of the car we had opou cars and wider cracks wer travlin da an nite an sure cud not sleep much so he was a sleep an fell out So there was 3 cars run over him nothing more an onley i re main S G H S G Hodnett  
rite soon giv mi regards to inquirin friends

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*Note:* The records show that Private James A. Cline, who fell from the railroad car and was killed near Goldsboro, N. C., on June 10, 1862, enlisted in "Evans' Guards," Troup County, Ga., on July 8, 1861. This company became Co. K, 13th Regt. Ga. Vol. Inf., Evans' Brigade, Gordon's Division, Army of Northern Virginia. He and Pvt. Hodnett were members of this unit. The letter is written from Staunton, Va.



Stanton Va June the 16th 1862

Dear Sister I seat myself to write you a few lines that will inform you all we are well and Doine well at present We left Savannah last saturday was a week we arrived here this evening we expected to go to Richmond but we never got any further than peters Burg then we were ordered to Lynch Burg then here I cant tell how long we will stay here as soon as we can get wagons we will leave for Jackson we are in 24 miles of him now Mary I think we will soon bee in Mariland then we will carry the War home to them we will Distroy

evry city we come to then Jackson is fighting evry Day or two though they are two large forces after him It is getting Dark now and I will have to quit soon give Sis my best respects and all the girls of my acquaintance and tell them I am clost to the yankeys a gain and will be sure to have to fight them now we will meet them on the land here it wont bee on water Mary I have seen more wounded men for the last 3 or 4 days than I ever saw in all my life be fore Mary I am on guard to Day Mary they say we wont get to write often though you must write as often as you can to us I exspect we will leave here to morrow for Jackson I think we will have a fine time in the Mountains this year we wont have to retreat so much as we Did last year though we will have to fight lots I hope we may fight our way to Newyork and philadelphia and back a gain and I Dont care where else we go so we whip the yankeys soon for I am geting tired of the war though I am wiling to go any where to whip them I thought I never wanted to come here any more but I am verry well satisfied here well I must come to a close Direct your letter to Stanton Va Lortons Brigade Jacksons Army nothing more give my Love to all the family and receive a large portion for your Self sam and Brother Jef will write some

John W Hodnett

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Note: "Lorton's Brigade" is Lawton's Brigade, Brigadier General Alex R. Lawton, C.S.A., commanding.



Gordonsville Virginia

June 20 1862

My Dear Wife I thaught I would drop you a few lines to let you hear from me once more as it is so I dont hear from you thes lines leaves me tolabable well and I hope tha may find you all well and doing well I have had a ver sore throat and a very bad could and had a caught with it but I have got nearly well of it I Started to Stanton and met them about ten miles befor I got there Tha was coming to this place Jacksons hold army is making there way to wards Richmon I doant no what tha are going to do but I expect it will not be meny dase before somthin will be done for last weke tha was running the troups from Richmon to the valle. I think tha has bin some eigt or ten thousand past har to day Stone Wall was in this place to day he doant

let meny now his plans I reckon it is rite that he doant he completely routed the Yanks from the valys he has surprised them several times and if tha doant mind he will be with them agane when tha ant looking for him We ar in about thirty mile of Manases we shal sta hear until to morrow I reckon we doant no what minute we ma leave hear the privats doant now where tha are going untel tha get ther The thirteenth Ga Regt is hear too Shurley is well and fat as a pig and bob is in Sharletsville we past thru there last eavning but we did not stop long anuff for us to go and se them bud and tip and Wash is all well tha are all out on picket now our company all is on picket but a few Write me a letter to Richmond and if I doant get it then it will be usless for you to write eny more Any as I could not get no letters from you I taken all my oald leters and red them which gave me grate consolation and I distroid them I hated to distroy them but I thaut it bes for I did not no hoos hands tha mite get in too. I wish I was at home to se my little fellow walking about and the rest of my little fellows and you too my I hope that time ma sune come when this unholy war ma close I mist close so for this time excuse all mistacs for I make a bad out I remane yo husband until deth

G A White

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*Note:* "Shurley" was Pvt. Shirley Nathaniel Sledge; "Bob" was Pvt. Robert H. Sledge, sick with fever at General Hospital, Charlottesville, Va., June 16, 1862; both of Co. K., 13th Ga. Regt. "Bud" is unknown. "Wash" was Pvt. Washington Mobley, and "Tip" was Pvt. Tip White, both of Co. B, 60th Ga. Regt., Lawton's Brigade, Jackson's Division.

◆ ◆ ◆  
Gordonville va June the 20th '62

Miss Mary Hodnett

Dear Sister I a gain set myself to Drop you a few lines that will inform you that we are all up but sam he has been complaining for 2 or 3 days but he is up and about I have a severe cold my self but it is geting better now I hope we will bee well Soon Well Mary I thought when we got to Staunton we would bee Done Rideing on the cars for a while but when we left there they put us on them a gain and sent us here we were 136 miles from richmond now we are 75 miles from there and others are going by going on toward Richmond I surpose



we will go on that way too I hope we will get in the rear of them at richmond and run them or whip them a way from there.

we cant tell anything a bout where we are going General Jackson Dont tell his business to any boddy our officers Dont know what or wher we are going to or Do You must write me a long letter and give me all the news in the settlement and how they are geting along farming and how the corn looks Mary I havent seen but one field of wheat cut since I have been here the most of the wheat is green I have seen some of the nicest cows and horses I ever saw in my life they are some of the best land here I ever saw it is the levelest I Dident think they were such land in Virginia Well I must come to a close give my love to all and receive a portion your self

John W Hodnett

this is Yankey paper that I have written on

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*Note:* The "Yankey paper" is a folded sheet 8 x 5". In the left hand upper corner of the first page is a patriotic symbol of a female riding an eagle, sword in right hand, U. S. flag in left hand. From the beak of the eagle floats a banner bearing the words, "One Flag For the Whole Country," the printing being in blue and red.



Richmond, Va.

July 5th 1862

My own Dear Wife:

I arrived in Richmond yesterday about 12 o'clk. and was about two days longer in coming than I would have been, had the trains made all the connections and run through in their usual time. As soon as I reached the place, I came on to the Hotel, where I found your Pa and Mattie, and also Ransom and Frank. The boys had just got here from their camp, a short time before I arrived. Ransom is in good health and is looking well. Frank has not been in very good health lately, and he looks thin and reduced. Wilbur is out with the regiment, some twelve or fifteen miles from town. He is in tolerably good health. Soon after I got here, I learned from your Pa that my brother William was in town

sick, and I went to see him as soon as I could. He is at a private house, and is quite weak and feeble, but is improving slowly at this time. He has been sick for some time, but he remained in camp until he was almost prostrated and could go no longer. I hope he will continue to improve, and get well as soon as possible. There are seven or eight members of the same company sick at the same place. I met with several members of our company soon after I arrived here yesterday, and heard from the regiment. They were in the fight on Friday evening, and our company had three men killed, and eight or ten or more wounded. Those killed were T. J. Moore, J. W. Ammons and W. H. Harrell. Among those wounded are S. J. Webster, S. Hart, J. H. Truitt, W. J. Ward, S. Suggs, T. J. Henderson and Monroe Davidson was slightly wounded, and perhaps others.

Nearly all of the wounded are here in the city. There are several officers and men of our regiment here in town, where they have come to rest and recruit their strength. The regiment was exposed to a pretty heavy fire from the enemy for a short time. There were something near thirty men killed and about one hundred and twenty wounded in the regiment. I understand they are now at Charles City Court House unless they have left that place again very recently. It is about thirty miles from Richmond to this place. I expect to start to them tomorrow morning. I am glad I did not bring any more baggage with me for I cannot carry much along with me, and I do not know that I will leave some of my best clothes in Richmond and buy some coarse stout ones to wear. Lieut. Williams carried my bed clothes along with him when he left Savannah but he left them with his trunk and bed clothes at a house on the way a day or two before they got into the fight. Williams is here in Richmond at this time.

The Colonel of the regiment to which Frank and Wilbur belong was killed. Gen Lawton who commands our Brigade, was reported killed at one time, but it was a mistake. There has been little or no fighting for a day or two past, and there is but little news of importance. I will write to you again very soon and let you know where to direct letters to me. Give my love to all the family. I am very anxious to hear from you, and I hope it will not be long before I can get a letter from you.

Your own loving and devoted husband

N. W. Miller

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*Note:* Lt. Miller left Weldon, N.C., at 3 o'clock a.m. July 4. The "cars" had

missed connections at Kingsville, S.C., Weldon, N. C., and Wilmington, N. C., resulting in "layovers" of several hours at each place, he states in a letter dated July 3, 1862. The men were killed and wounded at Cold Harbor, Va.



Stanton Va July the 24th 1862

Dear Sister It is with pleasure I seat myself to Drop you a few lines which will in form you how and where we are Sam has the Jaundice verry bad I have soreness in my brest and bowels but I think I shall go to the regiment in a Day or two any how Brother Jef is with the company he was well when we left there they are near Gordonsville now this hospital is verry badly crowded here is the Deaf and Dum assiloem there are a bout 1200 men here now and no telling how many will bee here soon

I wish I could get to go home a while now I could injoy it so well now eating fruet and fishing Mary I have a notion of Joining the regulars for 3 years and get furlowe for 3 months 100 Dollars bounty and 20 Days furlowe evry 6 munths and 21 Dollars a munth that will bee 252 Dollars a year and after the war breaks I will have nothing to Do but Drill all the time that will be lite work

All my clothes found me you need not be surprised to see me at home at any time in the course of 1 munth if I Join It looks like I never will hear from home a gain I sent some paper home by Dr Ridly and Mr Sledge when we left Richmond that was the first opportunity I had to send it I hope you have got it before this time and have riten to me I gave it to Mr Sledge he told me he would give it to Dr ridley for me. Well Mary you have heard often we have bin in the big fight but as for giving a Description of I cant attempt it for I couldnt come near to it in any way I have walked over lots of Dead men and seen hundreds and there are lots that never have been buried yet nor never will bee

Well I must come a close nothing more at present only I remain your affectionate Brother till Death

John W Hodnett

Direct your letter to Richmond Va  
Co K 13th Regt Ga Vol Genl Lawtons  
Brigade Jacksons Army

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Note: The "big fight" was the Battle of Malvern Hill, Va., on July 1, 1862.

Camp near Gordonville Va

July the 28th 1862

Mr William H. H. Hodnett

Dear Brother I seat myself this morning to Drop you a few lines which will in form you all I am well at this time I left Staunton yesterday morning Sam was mending had had the Jaundice but I think he will bee up in a few Days now Brother Jef Tip and Joe are well Tip is weak yet Well henry we are campd now I cant tell how long we will stay here they seam to think we will leave here in a Day or two any how it is said they are 40,000 yankeys in 10 or 15 miles from us but that Dont scare us at al if they will come up to see us we will give them a pretty good round with a bout 20,000 men it is said Jackson is waiting for reinforcements before he goes on in the valey As for my self I Dont think the fighting is nearly Done the War is Depending on foreign countrys now for the settlement of the war or at least they will have a han in it in some way or an other to settle the war I cant tell how yet it will bee no person can tell yet how it will bee but it will certainly end in our favour when it Does end or we will fight as long as we can raise an army to fight we can Do that some time yet well to change the subject I have been thinking a bout Joining the Regulars for three years but I recon it is a little Doubtful a bout it now well henry I want you to write to me as soon as you get this give all the girls my respects I have been un well ever since the fight at Richmond but I think I am geting strait again Well my paper is geting short I will have to come to a close Direct your letter to Gordonville Va nothing more at present only I remain your Brother till Death give my love to all and receive a portion yourself

John W Hodnett

Ps I have to frank this I cant get any stamps to go on it

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*Note:* This letter is written on the "Yankee paper" same as the letter of June 20, 1862.





Camp Near Richmond July 28th 1862

Ripley's Brigade.

My dear ones,

In my last letter I wrote to you that we had been transferred to General Ripley's brigade, but when the move was ordered we did not go & a petition went up to let us remain where we were. General Wright was well satisfied with the arrangement but Ripley would not listen and so on Wednesday last we went taking an early start and arrived in in this quarter after crossing James River at about 9 ocl. We are now in an open field about 2 miles from our old entrenched camp about 3 miles from the Seven Pines between the Williamsburg road & the James River R. Road. Not as pleasant a Camping place as the one on the Turnpike but tolerable good water. We are in D. H. Hill's Division who at present is not about here but is attending to some big job. In our brigade are the 44th Ga & 1st & 5th N. C. all told. I have not seen our Brigadier yet. On Thursday last an election was held for Brevet Second Lieut in our Co with the following result. W. W. Hulbert, 45 votes, J. T. Hill 17 votes. Quite a complimentary vote for Bill. Greer was elected orderly sergeant without opposition, & W. C. Cherry 5th Sergeant without a very close run. I took no particular interest in the election, acting as one of the managers & depositing my vote without much ceremony. On Saturday last Mr John Whitaker arrived in camp & I was glad to receive a letter from you all, thereby finding out to my great pleasure that you dear Heyman arrived safe at home & the Co is obliged to you for your kindness in looking after the baggage. Col Doles is of the opinion to leave all in Augusta, from whence they can be sent back here without cost or charges. Not having anything there myself any way will suit me. On Saturday night I also received a letter by mail dated July 11th from you dear Betty & Daniel. That our Co has so bad a name at home I am sorry to hear, surely the boys are not deserving it. Those who were able to fight fought nobly & those who were not there had legal excuses. As far as the boys were concerned having been in Richmond smoking cigarres, is a mere fabrication, may it have come from what quarter it pleases. 43 were in the fight at Malvern Hill & not seventeen. I got this statement from Hulberts morning report of that day. When the second charge was made only about 17 were with Capt Todd owing to the circumstance that they had to cross a ravine the best they could & were a little scattered although nobly fighting some with the 5th Ga others with other regiments. I was not there myself but got these facts from Bill



Hulbert whose business it was to account for the men & who was at the side of Captain Todd all day long. Some of our boys will be discharged today & go home as soon as they can.

You would oblige me very much by sending me a *Constitutionalist* with an obituary on Captain Todd leaving from these quarters. My health is good. Levi Sterne is in camp but not doing well. Farewell. Your brother

Louis Merz

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*Note:* The *Constitutionalist* was a newspaper published at Augusta, Ga., to which he had contributed an obituary on the death of Captain George Fauntleroy Todd, of the "West Point Guards," elected 1st Lieutenant on April 26, 1861. He was elected Captain May 9, 1861. Wounded at Malvern Hill, Va., on July 1, 1862, he died of wounds at Richmond, Va., July 15, 1862, and is buried there in Hollywood Cemetery. Captain Todd attended the famed Georgia Military Institute, Marietta, Ga.

See *Diary* of Pvt. Merz in *Bulletin 4* for an account of a company election on April 28, 1862.



Camp near Richmon

July 29th 62

Mr. A. C. Williams, Dear Brother in Law, Today I received yours mailed 24th which I gladly perused its contents. Amasa I was glad to hear that you were so well and stout and had enjoyed such health since you had been in the service of your country, also to learn that you had as many good officers as you do have for they are the main stake in these horrid times for some companies and some Regiments their officers are very rigid with their men. I am glad also you are so near home where you can hear and get things from for we have got in a country where there is not much nor much accomodation. This thing of being around Richmon is not as some may think especially where there is so many troops. We are now in Ripleys Brigade, transferred from Wrights back this side of James River, in about 2 miles of the city. I assure you there was some mad men when they had to come back over this side. Well, Amasa I recon you want to hear the news general, we three brothers are thus, I an Lucius left the Hospitle

about 6 miles from Richmon yesturday morning where I had been waiting on him two weeks sick of the fever he got able to walk a little and I brought him to Richmon and left him at a private house until he was able for duty he has had a spell before and did not get strait before he went on duty. Brother John's health has been feeble and he went to Richmon about the first of this month at the Hospitle he and Bob Wise both as soon as they were able to walk they sent them to Farmville a distance of about 50 miles from Rich. He wrote to me once since he got there I answered it and Tom Traylor wrote to Bob since but neither of us can get answer so I cant tell you how he is. George is going home shortly, he will get his discharge, he will be very proud of it I recon, he has ben sick at Petersburg about 3 weeks, his brother Gus died there. My health has been bad all the time I have been in service, I have been at the Hospitle once since I come into service, sometime I give out a day or two and then go ahead. It has been so bad I am tempted and will get me a substitute if I can find one and he has prices to suit for here is no place for a man that is lingering.

Well Amasa, I have had better or worse luck whitch ever you may term it. I have been into one heavy Battle whitch was on the first day of July that was the drive of the yankees to their Boats. I seen shell and balls too that day. We had our Captain Todd wounded, that evening I met one of his men that toated him out of the Battle field, he died in about two weeks afterwards. Several of our Company was hurt, John was, Lucius was not in it. I am satisfied with shell and ball now without trying any more, I was uneasy about you when I heard of that fight. Amasa as a man who has always been trying to live pious an right toward my Maker but since I have come here I have determined to live better than ever before. I want to know how you are living towards your Maker in this . . .

James L. Lovelace

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*Note:* Balance of the letter is lost. In a letter to his sister, Mrs. S. A. Williams, August 3, 1862, Pvt. Lovelace says, "I was one that toated my Captain (Todd) out off the Battle field and sit up with him that night, the tiresomest gob that ever I done, we toated him about 2 miles."



## Camp near Richmond

Aug 9th 1862

My dear ones! It has not been long since I wrote to you but supposing you have heard of the bloody fight we had here this week & myself being a participant I must inform you that I came out very well. On Wednesday last at 3 ocl. A.M. we were notified to prepare one day's ration & be ready to march by 6 ocl. The Yankees had taken possession again of Malvern's Hill & we were to go down to drive them away. We drew beef that morning, cooked and ate it believing that it might be the safest plan of carrying rations, but we had a few biscuits for hard times. At 7 ocl. our brigade started under command of some N. Carolina Lieut. Colonel, not a Colonel being present. We went down the Charles City road our regiment about 300 strong under command of Major Smith. The day was extreme hot & 5 in the Division were struck by "*coup de soleil*." Our regiment being in front the N. Carolinians could not keep up well & complained bitter; but Adjt Cook told them the reason was that when our regiment took its first lesson in marching the enemy was in our rear coming from Norfolk. Very good explanation I thought. We marched all day long until about 6 ocl that evening when we were halted and having arrived in the "White Oak Swamp" were ordered to "load at will." Right before us we saw a brigade in line of battle & Generals Ripley & McLaws passing us frequently we arrived at the conclusion that something would turn up & seeing a few prisoners brought in, we knew the Yanks must be somewhere. But any way an apple orchard being close by our Brigade acted like the very Hessians themselves & remarked that if we did not get the apples the enemy might. Excellent reasoning. About 7 ocl we went a little ahead, went down the Darpetown Road & halted for the night about 2 miles from Malvern's hill. In the night we heard 2 guns fire but slept undisturbed til daylight, when our provision waggons arrived & a barrell of whiskey. Then came the "Tug of War." It flowed freely, no martial law there, I tasted it, but it was so strong that I soon got enough. We cooked breakfast & Spoke of going back to this camp. Many troops passed us however & at 1 ocl P.M. we advanced, found the road blockaded by felled trees to prevent our artillery from advancing, but sharp axes, strong arms (not mine) soon cleared the way & we went in sight of Malvern's hill where we rested several hours & some of the boys went to the old battle field. At the house there they found 4 chairs on the roof & a negro told them that 4 Generals had been up there & seeing the rebels advancing from 3 diff. roads through the field too hot & left that night. The enemy had about 11,000 men there

while we advanced some say with 30,000 men. We were ordered back to our camp when at about 11 ocl in the night most of us stopped on the road & arrived in camp yesterday morning. We took 15 prisoners besides some sick ones. My health is good, that of the Co. is not; we lost another man by decease, Joe Mitcham. Jones & Trammell have substitutes. I saw a letter from Mrs. Todd yesterday in which she kindly remembered me. I wrote an obituary & sent it to the *Constitutionalist*, Augusta, but not enclosing any money, I am afraid they did not publish it. Phillip is quite sick & is going to town in a few minutes. I tried to go with him, but can not do it. Sergt Greer is dangerous sick.

Louis Merz



Chattanooga Tennessee  
August 30th 1862

My Dear Wife

We are all back at Chattanooga again for a short time. We came up from Camp Taylor on Long Island yesterday and now we are armed with Double barels guns and will leave tomorrow for Dunlap. I dont know where the place is though I think it is up the River about a hundred miles. I wrote to you after we landed at Camp Taylor but after I wrote we passed through a few hours that will claim a short notice in this letter. On Wednesday about twelve o'clock we heard the roar of artillery and on going out of the noise of the camp it was evident that they were fighting over the river and in a short time a courier came in haste with a dispatch from Gen Maxey (whom we were under at that time) and the order was for us to be ready to march in ten minutes. The order was promptly obeyed and we were armed with twelve guns to the company and very soon we were double quicking to join in the fight. We went about three miles and came to where we had to cross the river which appeared to be a very great obstacle to impede our march and did actually prove to be so. The River where we crossed is in two streams and runs on each side of an Island and both together is about a thousand yards wide and but one path that we could go without swimming and it was impossible for a regiment of men unacquainted with the route for all to go right. Ours being the sixth company to cross we had to stand some time and saw a great many get in difficulties and some



thrown from their horses and some very near drowning but when our time came we went in and one of the first men, J. T. Burton, got into swimming water and his horse didnt know anything about swimming and threw him off but guided by the hand of Providence he caught upon a rock which kept him from being lost. Another one of our men Adolphus Tommey from Thomas's settlement was thrown and it was with much more difficulty that he was saved. He washed down and caught upon a rock where he could just hold his head out and the water ran very swift which nearly exhausted him by the time a horse could be carried to him. The most of the Reg. however succeeded in getting over and turned up the river to Bridge Port where the fight was supposed to be. When we arrived we found that the fight had ended and the yankeys were retreating so we were ordered to recross the river again and about dark we began crossing and the most of us missed the way and had to swim though all came through much better than we went over. The yankeys had a very large encampment and were elegantly fixed up with everything to make them comfortable. It is said that we killed from 13 to 40 of the enemy and captured 50 thousand worth of government stores. We had no body killed and only two or three wounded. This was a very good initiatory step to the service of cavalry men and we will doubtless have to be dragged from place to place so long as our horses last and the way we have used them for the past week they cant last much longer than three months. I and Thomas have about as good horses as there is in the regiment and much better than the most of them, for crossing water, as neither of them are afraid of it at all. I am standing the service very well, much better than I ever thought I could. I can eat camp biscuits coffee and roasting ears without hurting me which has been my diet since leaving Camp Randolph. We draw plenty of provisions such as we drew when you was up at Camp Randolph. With the experience that I now have I find that we have too much baggage. Dr. Pattillo is going to pack his trunk this morning to send home and I am going to send home a portion of what I have for I want nothing more than I shall keep until cold weather and I will risk getting what I may need then. I will send one blankett, my worsted, and under shirt and cotton pants. Thomas will also send some things and he will send a minute of the things he sends. We are going to carry only five flies for our company from this place. The roads are so rough that it is impossible for a waggon to carry more than the fourth of a load. I am so confused by the noise that I can hardly write. I have been trying to write this letter all day and it is now nearly night. I have been detailed three or four times since I commenced and about ten minutes has been my longest writing. We have now packed Dr. Pattillo's trunk and put up our things so that you can tell



them apart. It is now said that we wont leave until Monday morning though I cant tell as it did not come from the Col.

It is just a week to day since I got a letter from you and I dont know when I can get one. If you will write immediately and direct to Chattanooga it is possible that it may be forwarded on to the reg. Tell Pa that I think that he had better give out coming to see us at present. We may get sick very soon and then we will want to see him much worse than we do now and it will be necessary that we should have some one to wait on us. We have been mustered for pay again to day but we cant draw it. The Quartermaster is deficient in some way so that he cant draw it for the Reg. and now it may be several months before anything more is done. I have a plenty of money yet and will need but very little so long as my clothing will last. You have often heard it said that the *war was the place to try a man* and I know it is so from actual observation. There are some that will stand the test and I feel that I have the advantage of the most of soldiers in having a true brother to advise in every thing and always ready to lend a helping hand. We try to do our whole duty and be faithful soldiers and leave the event with God. I want you to reconcile my absence the best you can and tell Mother (as I know her feelings for her children) to grieve after us as little as possible. The same hand that preserves us at home is still over us and whatsoever he doeth is Right. I will write again as soon as I stop. I am very anxious to hear from home. Give my love to the family and connection and neighbors.

Jno.

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*Note:* This letter was written by Pvt. John David Johnson, Co. D, 3rd Georgia Cavalry, C.S.A. His home was in Harris County, near West Point, Ga. Title of this *Bulletin* is taken from Pvt. Johnson's letter.



August 31st 1862

Gainesville 4 miles  
from the Manassas battlefield

My dear ones!

I send a letter this morning by mail, maybe you got it, may be not. We passed through Warrenton yesterday, received by the ladies by cheers,

smiles & something to eat. We stayed all night close by town, got up this morning at 3 ocl after cooking until 12 ocl last night, started at 6 this morning in the rain & arrived here at 1 ocl, roads muddy, & very tired. I saw here this morning fully 1,000 (thousand) Yanks captured by Longstreet. There was a heavy fight near here yesterday, loss heavy on both sides. General Wright's brigade suffered heavy. What an escape—Our officers baggage will be sent back today, we will start, so goes report, tomorrow to Harpers ferry & from there to Maryland. Pope got badly whipped yesterday, our forces are pursuing him & may reach Washington before he does.

Yours in haste

Louis Merz

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*Note:* This letter is written on a small folded scrap of ruled paper 6½ x 4" with pencil, addressed to Mr. H. Heyman, West Point, Ga., his brother-in-law.



Near Frederickstown Maryland  
Sept 10th - 4 o'clock a. m.

My dear ones,

We crossed (waded the Potomac) here last Friday night at 10 o'clock and Saturday arrived here, finding not much open Secesh but plenty of lagerbeer in this town, but I've not been there yet. Things were cheap here, but all exhausted, we captured shoes enough, good ones at that, one pair to a company, we got one pair No. 9 and one coat. I am almost barefoot, my shoes are in a bad condition. Day before yesterday we (I) washed my drawers and socks and had a fine time of it. We leave here in a few hours, the whole army is moving, where we are going to I don't know. We are all well. I have written to you often but have not received a line in answer. We have no mail and yearn to receive answers.

Warren James (Willy Hill wants Phillip to bring letters for him from Grantville) Bledsoe, Stanley, Cherry, Friesleben and all send their respects, not to forget Ed Sharpe. Yours affectionately, Louis Merz

P.S. Brady is all right. Sharpe wants shoes if possible. Willy Hill

wants any of the boys coming here to let his people know beforehand that they are coming. Give my respects to Captain Frost. Bill Hulbert wants to be remembered. We are in D. H. Hills Corps. Ripley acting Major General & Doles Brigade.

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*Note:* The date of this letter is September 10, 1862. Maryland was invaded and the Battle of Sharpsburg, or Antietam Creek, occurred on September 16th and 17th. Pvt. Merz was killed in battle on the 17th.



Camp Davis Hospittle Lynchburg Va

Sep 14 1862

Dear Parents I will Drop you a few lines to let you know where I am. I got slightly wounded in the Battle near Manassus on Saturday the 30th I have suffered a great eal with my hand the finger next to my little finger had to be taken out way back in my hand. the Dr says it will take 3 or 4 months to heal up. I would get a furlough & come home but I cant get one here I want Allen to come & see me & bring my winter goods & a blanket or two & some money. My Reg is cut all to pieces There was only five left for Duty in my company. My Capt was not hurt and none of the Lieutenants What few is left of the Company & Reg have gone out with Jackson towards Washington Jackson is giving them fits

Pa and Ma I will say to you both I went into this Battle bare footed & in my shirt sleeves. I shot 20 rounds I Picked up a par of old shoes some of the boys throwed away. I havent got any blankets No coat I Bled so much on my Blanket it wasnt fit to use I drawed a Blanket from this Hospittle to use till I leave here

I cant tell how soon I will be sent to some other Hospittle from here I am going to try to on the 15th to get transferred to Richmond. If I can get transferred to some other hospittle I will stand a chance to get a furlough home. I will rite immediately if I leave this place I may not suckceed in getting transferred to Richmond Hospittle. I want Allen to come and see me. Bring me some clothes & a par of shoes & socks & some money He can help me out in getting a furlowe home

I walked 65 miles from Manassus to take the cars after getting

strength a nuff to Travel I walked it in four Days I thank God for my life I will say to you all our Brigade taken 5 pieces of Cannons on Friday the 28th & prisoners a nuff to pull them all out Our General made them do so I must close I hope Allen will come as soon as he can. If you all think any thing of me let me no it for this one time I need help When he comes inquire for Camp Davis any Body can tell him where it is. I want him to come rite away for I havent got but one shirt & pants & draws no coat & a Barrowed Blanket May God Bles you all Your son  
Jesse C Dormon

at Lynchburg Va

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*Note:* The Second Battle of Manassas was fought August 30, 1862. Pvt. Dormon was a photographer before entering service and surviving examples of his work show skill and artistry. His brother Allen Dormon later went into service as a chaplain.

In a letter to Pvt. Dormon's father, Wiley Dormon, June 21, 1862, from camp near Richmond, Va., his company commander, Capt. A. S. Blythe wrote his father concerning the failure of Pvt. Dormon to write home as often as his parents felt he should. He wrote that the boy was in "fine helthe" and was, he thought, the man with the longest service in the 2nd Louisiana Regiment, this regiment, after Chancellorsville, and death of General Stonewall Jackson, having been reorganized in the spring of 1862. The captain stated "he is always ready for any kind of Duty And Makes as good a Soldier as any man in the Confederate Army. I am Sorry to Say he is like my Self and a great many others in this War. We are ConScripts. That word ConScript Solders dont like and they will never be satisfied about it. I gave him a Scolding about not writing his Pa & Ma oftiner. I think he wil do better forward. Since have ben ConScripts we Reorganised the Reg and I was Elected Capt of the Claibrone Guard."



Richmond Virginia

September 19, 1862

Mrs Martha Lovelace,

Dear Sister, I avail myself of this opportunity to write you. You have no doubt felt bad of me for not writing oftener as I have been situated so that I could not write but few letters. I have read Benjamin's letters from you and could thereby hear from you and sister, Mary Ann, and he in writing to you could give you all the news, and my

condition also. I offer that as my principle excuse. Ben is now in Maryland with our army. You cannot hear from him by letter as our mails do not extend into that state. Our regiment left Richmond on the 19th day of August. It had been in no fight up to the 14th of this month as I saw a gentleman that left the regiment at that date, which is the last news I have had from the regiment. I have been in bad health for sometime. I am now able to go to the regiment and will start from here on the first train that I can go on. There are so many soldiers going through that I will have to wait until Monday I feel.

I am so nervous this morning that I can scarcely write. I hope you will be able to read this epistle. I have been suffering with the chronic dierhea. When I was releaved of that I was taken with yellow jaundice. I think I am well now except weakness. It is about one hundred and sixty miles from here to the regiment. I will have to walk about ninety miles. I hope to be able to make the trip without a breakdown. I heard from you by John Miller when you were in West Point. I also heard that William had been home. I am sorry that he is in the service, he is needed at home, and would be exempt if he was at home not enlisted, all are exempt I believe he is over 35. Tell George not to leave under any circumstances, though he is too young, he cannot be received in the army now in any capacity under 18 years of age.

This is a great revolution. It has no equal in the history of the world. We are contending against an unequal enemy whose object is subjection, confiscation of all our property and the emancipation of our slaves, led on by fanaticism, respecting none of our rights, civil or political, offering abuse to the ladies of our country, molesting their homes and invading our soil.

We have been until recently on the defensive. We are now beginning to invade their soil. The God of Battles has extended us a helping hand and aided us in driving back our enemy to his own country. I hope the Yankees will soon be satisfied that war is not profitable to them and be ready to make peace so that this war may come to a close.

We are engaged in a just war but I have no faith of our being victorious in the close. We are justified in fighting on as long as we have any enemy on any of our soil. War is an awful scourge to any country, pilaging, devastation, and waiste is its consequence—in every community, widows and orphans, suffering lame men. I am in the struggle and expect to stay until it is ended unless I become disabled



from disease or death. If I was at home I could not be contented to stay if I had no particular care on my mind. A man with a family has much to keep him at home. My earnest prayers are that this war shall soon end, it is a hard duty for any.

Benjamin was enjoying good health when he left here. He is a model of a soldier, was ready to perform his duty. He seemed to be contented. He went through the fight around Richmond in the midst of a hail of bullets, shell and cannon balls but came out unhurt. He stood to his place like an old veteran soldier when many shrank from fear or cowardice. Our company sustained itself finely. You can expect to have a good account of Benjamin. About ten members of our company are at home on furlough sick, some will be coming on soon. Send your letter to Brother Nathan or Dr. Lovelace and they will give the letters to some of the Negroes coming in for you. I cannot now say when I will be home if ever. When I do I will come to see you. I could not do so in January on account of business. Let Sister Mary Ann read this letter. I cannot write to both of you now, this will answer for both. My love to you both and to your families. I remain your affectionate brother

T. J. Atkinson

PS I am now 1st Lieutenant of my company. Captain Todd killed.

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*Note:* Lt. Atkinson died of pneumonia at camp near Guinea's Station, Va., April 7, 1863. He is buried in Troup County, near West Point, Ga., on lands originally owned by the Atkinson family.



At Camp, 12 miles from Winchester, Va.

September 28, 1862

Dear Friend,

With tears in my eyes and great emotion I am sitting down to write these lines. No doubt you have received the message that Mr. Merz lost his life during that last horrible battle.

I can well imagine the pain and sadness you endured. May God Almighty give strength to all of you to carry on. I cannot comfort

you for I, too, lost in him a brother, a friend who can never be replaced, but we must console ourselves that there beyond the horizon is no pain, no sadness. Our dear beloved rests now in peace and let us hope that we see him again where there is no separation. The details how he died you heard already. He was lost early in the battle. I was not in the fighting as I was forced to stay back but as soon as I learned that he was killed I rushed to the battlefield in order to claim his body, but I could not get close enough for the enemy had taken over where our regiment was fighting that morning. He had no money on him—only a memorandum book and unfortunately I could not even get that. That is war for you. Only God knows when it will be over. The Army is in poor condition, half naked and barefooted. My own clothes and shoes are in pieces and there is no chance of getting them replaced. Have to bring this to a close. With many regards to you, Mrs. Heyman and Daniel,  
Your Friend, A. Sterne.

PS Let me hear from you and if you write you must name the division: Ripley's Brigade, D. H. Hill's Division.

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Note: Pvt. Ansel Sterne is writing about the death of Pvt. Louis Merz.



Camps near Winchester Va Oct the 1st '62

Miss Mary Hodnett

Dear Sister I again seat my self to Drop you a few lines though I have not heard from you all since I wrote last these lines leaves me well an Brother Jef well Sam is gone to the hospital a gain he cant stand to march he was swelled like he had the Dropsy John got wounded as you have heard I surpose I have not seen him since Tip has not been up with the company since we left Gordonville last he had the chills then I heard from him the other Day he exspected to come up in a few Days the other Boys are well Enos ward is sick too William was wounded as you have heard before this time it was one of the most hard fought battles ever fought almost I didnt get in it nor sam and Brother Jef Brother Jef was left at Martinsburg sick my self and sam was left at Harpers ferry sick and Enos Ward Brother Jef is up with the company now and able to eat all we can get only half rashions at that we will draw some money in a few Days now can by something then We have hard times here I am verry anxious to hear from home

I Dreamed last night of geting a letter something like a copy book some 10 or 12 sheets in it I would like to get such a one there is a talk of our going to Savannah a gain soon but I cant tell yet whether we will or not but one thing sure we nedd rest verry bad we have been going ever since we have been in Va sure and fought as hard as any body I want to go to Savannah so I can get oysters and fish to eat I would have riten before this time but I couldnt get paper they are a man in camps now selling paper at 20cts a sheet we are all most out of close and nearly bare footed I wore my old hat out but I got a yankee cap at Manassas it will last me some time all the winter but my shoes are a bout Out I recon we will Draw shoes soon or the army will bee bare footed Mary you heard of our takeing harpers ferry we got 1000 men and some 2500 negroes lots of guns and 70 odd pieces of artillery 2 Days after that the battle come off in Maryland 25 of our company was wounded and one killed 3 or 4 others marked Joe has caught up a gain his arm is well but bare footed Well I recon I will have to bring my lines to a close give my love to all the family and friends and receive a large portion for your self John W Hodnett

Ps I forgot to tell you I had been in 18 miles of Washington City and to Fredrick city Maryland Good By for this time John W Hodnett

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*Note:* The capture of Harper's Ferry by Jackson was on September 15, 1862; the Battle of Sharpsburg, or Antietam Creek, Md., was fought on the 16th and 17th. Pvt. Hodnett got the "yankee cap" at the Second Battle of Manassas, August 30, 1862.

◆ ◆ ◆  
Oct the 16th 1862

Miss Mary Hodnett

Dear Sister I embrace the present moments of Droiping you a few lines which will inform you that we are all 3 well once more Sam came up yester Day he looks better than you ever saw him in your life he is as fat as James was when he came home from the cost and as for my self I am as fleshy as I was when I left Savannah we have been resting one month now we are geting rested good I Dont feel like the same person now I will change the subject I have no war news that is reliable I suppose you can hear the most reliable news of that but I have some very good news we have a verry good prare meetings here we

have prare meeting evry night and at one oclock in the evening they are considerable feeling among the people a good many morners some few have professed it is a general thing throughout the army here and through the country too

I want you to remember us in your Devotions I hope the war will soon close so we can meet at home together around the family alter and hear our parents pray and sing and go to church to gether Mary I miss all these priveileges Mary we have started a little secret prare meeting some five or six of us I want you all to remember us in the behaf of it that it may prosper and grow till all the company will join us and that we may have a camp meeting of it while we are in the service of our country we may bee in the service of our God too as well as our country I imagine I can hear you all in our behalf but if I could no that we had met in the silent grave to gether though a long ways a part how we would feel strengthened we meet a bout 9 oclock at night

we are needing some close now if you have got them done and have a chance to send them I wish you would Do it if you cant send them before John come send them then Dont send but by some one I will have to get a pare of pants any how as soon as I can we will Draw in a few days I hope or maby to Day some have come now I must close I could write all Day but paper is to scarce in this country nothing more good by for this time

John W Hodnett

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*Note:* The following words are written across the top left hand corner of the first page: "Ive Drawed a pare of pants for \$7.00 they are very good ones."



Dec the 10th 1862

Dear Father mother Brothers and Sisters I seat my self to Day to drop you a few lins but can not express my feelings this Morning for I am now Seeted to right you the Sad nuse of the Death of my Dear Brother John he dide at Middletown a bout 13 mils from Winchester he Dide the 24 of Nov with the Small pock he was taken the Sevent of Nov and I was taken the 12 we was Sent to middletown and two days in the horse pittle and then sent to a old School house and kept a day or too and then sent to a out house a mile from town in a

wagon and it a raning and no Sheet to the wagon at tall and the house was verry opou and thare we had to suffer and thar I experiance a Sad time but thanks be to God I had one consolation and that was My Brother left bright evidence that he was going to rest the night before he dide his Sole seme to be happy he was horse but I coud hear him Say Glory and was Singing thare is union in heaven and thare union in my Sole Oh let us all strive to mett him in heaven Whare thare hant no more triels and trubble nor pane nor death May the Lord helpe us is my prayr Oh I have Seene Senes Since I have Seene you all I want you all to remember me in all of your prars for I am exposed to danger on every hand I forgot to say to you that Brother John was Sensible of his death he told me and our nurse a day or too before he dide that his time ware most out hear he dide a bout eight Oclock at night he dide like one going to Sleep I was laying by his Side and the nurse Seting close by with a candle a burning and neither one of us new When he dide I thout that he had drop of to Sleep I hapen to notis to See if he was covered up good and I notis that he wasent a breathen as I coud See and ask the nurse to bring me the candle and to my great Surprise he was Dead May the Lord help us to meet him in heaven is my pray. I see that I will have to Close I feel happy to tell you that I found Brother Samual hear whare I am last eavning I was verry uneasy a bout him I hadent heard a wor from him Sence he had ben Sent to Winchester I did not now whether he was ded or a live tel I saw him he is well I am now at Stanton got hear day before yestidy I am well all to my feet they are verry sore from walken Right Soon to me Good by

T J Hodnett

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Note: This letter is written from Staunton, Va.

◆ ◆ ◆  
Bivouac near Fredericksburg Va

Dec 15th 1862

Dear Father I have only time to write you a short letter this morning. Our Brigade arrived here on Saturday morning and we advanced upon the enemy and drove them back towards the river nearly a mile. The Brigade suffered a good deal. We made a very daring charge on them and arrived very near one of their batteries and came near taking a part of it. After we had driven them back a considerable distance our ammunition was nearly exhausted and we were not reinforced and we



had to fall back a short distance. I was struck by a piece of a shell but it was so far spent that it did me no injury. The firing was heavy and I feel thank ful to God that I was preserved. One man of our company is known to have been killed on that day and several others wounded besides two or three others missing and supposed to be either killed wounded or prisoners. We came off the field Saturday evening very much exhausted, and on yesterday morning we were sent back and held the advance of our lines at that point until about day break this morning when we were relieved by another Brigade. The enemy's batteries fired on us yesterday and killed another one of our men, R. L. Irvin, son of Josiah Irvin. We were in plain view of a large portion of Burnside's army all day yesterday. I saw Brother William Saturday evening as we came from the field. His regiment had just come up. I do not know whether he has been in battle yet or not. It affected me very much when he came and shook my hand and I hope and trust he will pass through safe if his regiment is engaged. I also saw John & Lucius Lovelace. There will probably be another battle today. I have not time to write a long letter. Write to me and direct letters to Richmond. Tell all to write. Your Son, N. W. Miller

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*Note:* He was fighting in the Union repulse at the Battle of Fredericksburg, Va., on December 13, 1862. N. W. Miller and John and Lucius Lovelace were first cousins.

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Dear Father Mother Brothers and Sisters    I agane take my Seet to comply with your request    You wanted to know all the perticklers about Brother John and My Self    Brother John was takken the 11st of Nov and I the 12th    we was sent to Middletown the fourteenth of Nov    we was put in to a large Church that they had ben useing for a hospital    We was cep thare to or three days    the Drs then de Sided that we had the Smalpock    we then was sent out in a old School house    we then lade sick thare too days and then the People in the town commenced making a uprow about our being thare with the Smallpock    the Dr then had a wagon brout up and put us in it and it a raning and no sheat over the wagon and we was sent a mile from town and it raning all the time    we were going    we ware put in a old house and it very opou and it was verry cold and we both taken cold and we didnt have but one blanket a pease and a Straw Mattres to ly on    we put our mattres toget    So we coud cover with the too blankets though you may now that we suffered with cold    we tride to get more blankets but the Dr Sed that he coudent get them    Brother John only live a five or Six days after we war moved thare    you wanted to now wether we had any attention or not    the nurse that wated on us done all that he coud for us I think

You wanted to now his name    his name was Mr Hawood    he had a middle name but I have forgotten it but I think that he sind it Wm H Hawood    you wanted to now wether he was a Solger or not    he was a Solger at that time and be long to the 26 Ga Regiment and in this Brigade    he come on with me when I left thare to Stanton and got a discharge thare    he had had the White Swelling in one of his legs before he come into serves and coulden Stand it to march    you wanted to now whare he live but I have forgotten the name of the Ci that he live in though he lived about 25 mils from Macon, As for somthing to eat we got anuff Such as it was    We got beaf and bread and wheat Coffee twist a day, you wanted to now the name of the Dr that come to see us    I never now his name and I dont now whare he livs    he come to see us onc a day but I think that he is like all the rest of the Dr he didnen now what to do for the Smalpox    Well I have trid to give Some discription of our treatment but can give my fealing when my Dear Brother dide    he was Sensible of his death    he told me too or three days before he dide that his time was Most out hear    a While before he dide he seme to be verry happy and was Singing thare union in heaven and thare is union in my Sole    Oh how coud I of Stud it if it had not of bin for the bright evidence that he left that he was going to a better world    I do not dought but what My Dear Brother is in a better world, and Oh

that we may all meet him in that bright and happy land I pray you wanted to now how he was bered after he dide I think it was three days before I could get a coffen to put him in and the fourth be fore he was bered He was bered in a cofen when the coffen was brout they brout it in Sight of the house and hollow and the nurse had to go and get it and then thare wasent no one thare to put him in but the nurse and me and I wasent able to Stand on my feet though we had to put him away thare was too men Sent thare to dig the grave and they bered him he was bered in a butiful plase thoug thare wasent one bered thar he was bered a mile from Midletown near the turnpik that leads from Stanton to Winchester a head bord marked John Hodnett 13th Ga Regiment he dide as one going to sleep I was laying by his side but never new when he dide he dide the 24 of Nov 1862 May the Lord grant that we may all meet him in heaven I pray Good by T J Hodnett

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*Note:* The male nurse was Pvt. William H. Haywood, Co. E, 26th Ga. Regt., who enlisted September 25, 1861. Records show he was given a certificate for discharge November 22, 1862, but no record of discharge.



Camp near Port Royal Va

Febry 25th 1863

My Dear Sister, I have received two letters from you since I wrote to you last but I did not get either one of them until a considerable length of time after they were written. I have had a good deal of business on my hands for two or three weeks past. I have been appointed Judge Advocate of a General Court Martial for this Brigade and the Court has been engaged in the trial of some cases and I have been tolerably busy in attending to business in connection with the Court.

The weather has been very bad for several days, the snow was about a foot deep on the ground two or three days ago, but it is now beginning to melt away. We expect to move from this place as soon as the roads are in a condition to be traveled. It is supposed that we will move up nearer to Fredericksburg, but whether to remain there or not we do not know. A part of our troops have moved away from this line and have gone on towards Richmond and are supposed to have gone, some of them on the South side of Richmond, and others to North or South Carolina. A portion of the Yankees have left the other side of the river,

and it is very well understood here now that there will be no fight here soon. I suppose brother William has reached home before this time. I went to his camp to see him about two weeks ago and he expected to leave in a few days but I have understood he did not get off as soon as he expected. I have not been very well for over a week past but I am better now. I have suffered some with bowel disease which has reduced me a good deal and rendered me weak. I have also suffered with the tooth ache. I have one or two teeth which are decaying and the plugs have come out of them and they have all been giving me pain. If they continue to trouble me I think I will have to try to get a leave of absence and go to Richmond or somewhere else where I can find a dentist and have them worked on. How is Grand Ma Lovelace getting on? Has Pa gotten entirely over the effects of the fall he received when I was at home. Tell Alva and Henry to write to me and you must write very soon. I would like to know what Sister Amanda's Post Office is. My love to the family. Affectionately your Bro

N. W. Miller



Camp Fairfield, Tenn.

March 8th 1863

My dear Wife

I wrote you a short and hasty letter the day I arrived, but feeling that you are ever anxious to hear from me I will now attempt to write again. When I left I expected to stop a while at Chattanooga but having to lie over a whole day I concluded not to stop. I left Chattanooga a little after day and arrived at Wartrace late in the evening and there I learned that our regiment was at this place and after putting away part of my baggage I shouldered the rest and made for the camp accompanied by Wm. Hudspeth and Sam Brown of Russell. We walked out some three miles and there being frequent showers were delayed and night about to overtake us we stopped and put up with an old fellow, but the only accomodation he could give us was a room and fire. We fared finely as we had plenty of victuals that we had brought from home and putting our blankets together we made a comfortable bed in front of the fire. The next morning we came out to the regt. and found them camped in a thickly timbered piece of wood near the little village of Fairfield, from which the camp takes its name. The most of the company



were on picket when I arrived, but returned in the evening having been out the two days previous. We now have a larger company than we have had since we left Chattanooga last fall, numbering now more than fifty after discharging six. The six discharged are, Nat Cooper, Wm. Taylor, J. D. Robertson, M. Henley, Ben Gordon and Lem Davis. You would probably like to know how we are faring in the way of rations. We are getting about one-third of our meat rations in bacon and the balance in pickle beef and bread of very coarse meal without sifting. We get plenty of the above and as long as we do that well I shall not complain. Judge Davenport, our commissary has taken Thomas to forage for him and while he is going about through the country he can bring me in something extra occasionally. The rules are more strict now than they were before I went home but I suppose that is owing to being under a different general. The boys say we will not have to fight so often as we did under Wheeler, but fight harder when we do get into an engagement. There has been several skirmishes in hearing since I have been here though they were only of short duration. Night before last we received orders to be ready to move at a moment's warning that Rosencrantz was advancing but now it is said that he is retreating, but these are only what I have been accustomed to hearing and may either be false or true, for I assure you it is a hard matter for any one to find out the real movement of the army.

I found my horse alive but very poor and in a bad condition generally. I dont think though that he is materially injured and probably might be as good as he ever was if I had him where he could be taken care of. I shall have to do something with him and get me another horse before long. I have not drawn any money yet though we will this evening or tomorrow for two months only. I am anxious to hear from you now and it has been only a week since I left and of course cannot expect a letter in several days yet. I dont know whether you could cross the river in several days or not after I left as it was tolerably full at West Point. I found Fletcher at the depot without difficulty and stopped with him only a minute or two. He said he had been well, though he appeared to be a little hoarse.

Today is the Sabbath which we are required to keep sacred and holy but instead of observing it as a holy day it really seems as if there was more business and greater bustle than usual. While I am now writing there are some of the boys sitting in a short distance of me playing cards and all over the encampment I can hear the blacksmiths hammers ringing. This morning I heard cannonading at a distance and Thomas has just returned from foraging and he says there is fighting on two roads ten

miles above. The probabilities are very favorable to the conclusion the enemy is advancing and if so we will have a general fight as soon as the weather will admit. We are having a great deal of rain up here now. It has rained every day since I have been here and sometimes very heavy.

March 9 — I neglected to finish this letter yesterday and now I am seated in the back part of a little tent to finish it for the morning mail. I drew forty eight dollars yesterday and collected the most that the boys were owing me so I have enough money for the present. There is nothing new to report in the movements of the Army. Everything very quiet since yesterday morning. Our regt. went out on picket this morning and will be gone three or four days. I have got permission to go out and get me a horse. I have four days and I intend taking my old horse and if I can trade him I will do so, and if I cannot I shall put him in the care of some man in the country somewhere and get Pa to send after him. Shade Maddox will go with me on this trip on the same business. When you write I want you to write all the news. Write the war news and what the people say about the prospect for peace. I am here circumscribed in my limits and my privileges so restricted that I cant get any paper and the only way that I can hear anything elsewhere is from letters. Colonel Crawford has resigned and gone home and Lieutenant Colonel Kennon is now colonel of our regt. It is believed up here that Callaway will tender his resignation very soon. The boys that went home without leave are all back and I recon there will be nothing done with them. You must write often and until otherwise directed direc to Wartrace. Write all about Mollie and tell her she must write Pa a letter. Nothing more at present. Give my love to all. I remain

Your devoted husband

J. D. Johnson

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*Note:* Pvt. Johnson served first in Co. D, 3rd Georgia Cavalry. The regiment went with General Joe Wheeler into Kentucky in 1862, where a large part of the command was surprised and captured. Those captured were exchanged. He later served in Captain S. H. Dent's Battery, an early Alabama organization composed only partially of Alabama men. This unit fought at Chicamauga, Missionary Ridge, the Atlanta campaign and at Mobile at the close of the war. Pvt. Johnson was paroled from Dent's Battery, Colonel Hoxton's Battalion, Smith's Brigade, May 18, 1865 at Meridian, Miss.



Va March 29 1863

Camp Near Hamtons Crossings

To Miss Mary Hodnett

Dear Sister It is with pleasure that I seat my self this cold Sabbath to right you a few Lines which will inform you that we are all well and doing verry well I admit that we might do better in some respects You know Sister that I left a large family at home and that family was at the proper stage to need proper training A Consiousness of this fact burdens me fearing that Mary could not shoulder the task but before I left home I had a consiousness that all was right Under this conviction I left home Cherfully the last time as could be expected under the circumstances. I have remained so up to the present, when I came into camps I saw a good many things that appeared discouraging at first sight, but after a day or two I saw something that was verry encouraging to me and that was a Meeting that was being carried on by Chaplin Smith of the Sixtieth Ga redgment. This Meeting is a union Meeting of all the denominations, and is called the Soldiers Union Society, Which has rules and stating in each one its object the whole showing the design of the Society. The Society receives members by opening the doors of the Society in the way we receive members into the Church, after the Subjects present themselves for Membership. The qustion is asked by the Chaplin whether there is any objection to receiving them. The vote is then taken, if received, the right hand of fellowship is extended by each member of the Society. This is now represented by each redgment. Now, in Lawtons Briggade I beleave they gain by Scores. The Society meets once each Night 3 times on Sunday half after 10, three, candle Lighting. Sister Mary I see I am to perticular I think our brothers will go. They have commenced going too meeting. The Meetings are interesting—Mourners every Meeting. God is reviving his believers. The Soldiers amids hardships and privations are now more zealous for the Cause of Christ, Than our Christian friends at home. It would do you good if you could hear the tap of the drum for meeting and see the Soldiers gather for Meeting. Not by the dozen, But by the hundreds. I can give you an idea by stating one instance, Trid on one occasion at night. It was cold, and Dark, a cloud rose and commenced hailing and we were covered with the cloud alone. The Preacher wanted to dismiss the Congregasion, the Cry was heard, Not So, we have stood guard a many night wors than this. So they never stoped for rain and hail. You must draw your own conclusion as I have not Space. Friday, fast day, was a remarkable day in camps. The sign is right hear. I would that the

people at home could umble themselves, as I believe the soldiers are  
doing. Sister Good by

G T Hodnett



Near Vicksburg Chicasaw Byo

April 13/63

Dear Wife I this morning take the pleasure of riting you a fu  
lins to let you no that I reseed your veary kind leter yesterday I was  
glad to hear that you and the children was in join good health and all  
the conection thes lins leaves me well though Bud & Straten is both  
puney though tha are both able to be a bout thare is some others in  
the companey that is a litle sick though I dont think any of any ways  
dangers I am in hops that thes lins may find you all well and doin  
well and en join your self finley though I fear that you will injoy your  
self much longer I fear the Presing Officers (Impressment Officers) will  
be going round in Randolph (County) soon and I no I dont want them  
to take any thing that you have got and if you think you have any more  
than it will take to do you I expect you had beter let B R Sell some for  
the Government wont give as much as he can get from the Sitersons  
(citizens) and when I have to by I have to give the Speclators (specu-  
lators) prise and that is from \$1 to \$2.00 for meat and 75 cents for flour  
I dont think tha ought to take your meat and only pay you onley 35 or  
45 cents and I have to give such big prises when I have to by We  
have to by meat every onse and a while I dont want you to sell your  
Porvisions unless you have more than will take to do you I dont want  
you to sell and then have to by. Susan you rote that you have got you  
a Girl to live with you I am in hops you and her may get a long well  
to gether I am in hops that she will be smart You must get her to  
earn what she eats and wears if you can. Susan I for got to tel B R  
that John Culpeper got to his Regiment the 37 was stationed in 6 mils  
of us when he come he landed hear a bout the 27 of March thear  
Regiment is gon now up a bout Greenwood that is some 200 mils a bove  
this. We are still waitin for the Yankes to make thear apearens hear and  
I think we will wait a good while longer if we stay at this place, we had  
a fine rane last night to lay the dust it come in a good time and come  
prety it did not come like the last one before it Pufing and bloin you just  
ought to have seen us holden our old tent and hearn it taring when the  
rain quit it was nearley torn in too though I in joied the fun the best  
you nearley ever saw I cold in joy my self in serves as good as a most  
any one if I new that you was faring as well as you wold if I was with  
you and cold hear from you oftener I no I am a way and canot get



back and I no thare is no use in bein down in the mouth a bout it we just as well laugh as cry though our fare is hard I fear that we will have to fare harder now than we have ben we have ben drawin Beef for the last 3 or 4 days and it is not fat by any means I fear it will make us sick to eat it, Susan you rote that J F N ses that thare is some men that wants to by my Comins plase tel him and B R if tha can get 8 hundred \$ for it I am wilin to take that though if lands is much hire now than tha war when I left I want them to have more I dont no the prises of land tha no more a bout that than I do I want all I can get for I have to pay large prises for what I get I paid \$4 for a bout 1 lbs of Tobacco the other day and every thing els is in Propotion with that I have a veary pleasant plase to rite this morning I and John Hoopper is in old Gin House that has I recon 20 bails of sead Coton in it we come hear just to get of to our self and this is a veary pleasant day though Cloudey Oh if you was to see the Pretty Forist that lies just be fore my eyes now with it Fine Green dress spotted with the Finest of flours it looks like nearly all the treas and bushes weeads grass & vines has flours in this contrey and them that is pretty Oh if we cold only have Pease once more and I cold get a home in such a contrey as this if the winter wold not be so raney and the in seckes so bad in the sumer I think I cold live as happy as a king. The Corne round a bout our camps that ben scatered out and has come up is knee high and the grond is hard as a yard though I have not seen a hill of corn this year that was planted nor I dont think thare is much a bout hear I cannot see any preparation for making any thing hear though I recon thare is some up from where the solgers is station the plantions has no fensing rond them hear though I dont think thare is any stock hear to bother I have not seen more than 20 Hogs in the woods since I have ben in the State and about the same number of Cattle.

Susan give my love to all and save good posion for your self Oh cold I only get to seat myself at your table to night to eat with you and the children and then on one side see my Mother and see her and talk see you an her eat it wold do me the most good you ever saw Good by Susan

W A Stephens

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*Note:* In another letter, February 17, 1863, Sgt. Stephens has this to say about rations and beef in particular: "We get plenty such as it is we get meal that will ratle when poren it is so corse the Porest Beaf you ever saw men eat and nearlest the Porest you ever saw Walk you would not beleave me if I worst to tel you how pore tha are we get rise and sugar and Peas we do finley when we get Pease plenty if we do have to boil them in just strait water with a little Salt in them."

Mrs. Stephens was Miss Susan Hodnett before her marriage. She was a sister



of the Hodnett brothers. Mr. and Mrs. Stephens lived near Louina, Randolph County, Ala. Their daughter, Mary Anderson Stephens, married William G. Shafer of West Point, Ga.



Williams Port Maryland

June 17th 1863

Dear Father,

Again I have the opportunity of writing you a letter in reply to yours of the 4th inst which I received a few days ago. I am glad that the power of communication is not entirely deprived from me. My health is very good; and I have stood the march exceedingly well better than the maj portion of the company. Judge Traylor is a little unwell today. We have been here since the evening of the 15th. We left Culpeper C. H. the day after I wrote you last, proceeded from there to Front Royal, crossing the Blue Ridge at Chester Gap, from there to Millwood thence to Berryville where we found a few yankees, but they made no fight, thence to Middletown, Bunkerville & Martinsburg where we found the enemy again, captured a Battery and a few prisoners, with any quantity of Commissary stores. We left there on Monday last and arrived here the same day where we found no enemy at all; all having gone the day previous. We will not remain here longer than tonight; but our destination is not known to any. We have captured the most of Millroy's forces at Winchester, the particulars of wich I do not know as we get no papers at this time, only two mails since we left Guineas. The boys are all cheerful and confident of success, wherever we may strike a blow; I am better pleased every day with our Maj & Lieut Generals, both of whom are worthy of the position they occupy. I have met with a good many secesh over here, and plenty union also. This is one of the most delightful countries in the world. We learn this evening that Gen. Lee has whiped Hooker again, how true cant tell, but hope it is so. We have not been in any of the fights yet but very near three or four times. We are about 8 miles from the Pensylvania line, some of our cavalry have been very near the line if not over it. We have been living for several days off of the commissary stores we have taken; and have plenty yet. Write soon; as there is nothing that affords me more pleasure than a letter from some of you. Farewell, Your son

Lucius T. C. Lovelace

Camp near Greencastle, Pennsylvania

June 23, 1863

Dear father,

I again have the opportunity of writing you a letter and will avail myself of it by writing you word where I am and how we are all progressing. My health is exceedingly good at this time, so are the other members of the Company. We left Williams Port on the 18th and reached Hagerstown, after a march of 5 miles where encampd until yesterday (22nd). Hagerstown is quite a nice place about 3000 inhabitants, we met with a very warm reception by many of the inhabitants. We left for this place yesterday morning we crossed over in this state about 10 o'clock at Middleburg; the people all did not greet us much; they appeared as if they had been taking something very bitter.

We have a fine country to get forage from as it is very rich, and the people raise only wheat, corn & hay etc. We are getting plenty of fat beef to eat now, we are fairing better than the boys did in the Maryland trip last year. We will be able to get horses and cattle enough to do us for some time. I have seen several thousand fine horses, the Calvary all are equipping themselves well. I have seen some of the finest horses I ever saw. We got a good deal of milk, butter, honey & apple butter from the citizens here; they all (or most of them) have treated us better than I expected. Our officers are very strict with us about taking any private property, which I think to be right, though their army pay no attention to private property in our contry.

I have seen the finest wheat here I ever saw grow, and the finest clover fields. This country is very different from Ga both in climate and customs of the people; this is only suited for grain and pasturing while our state produces cotton, rice and various other commodities that will not grow here. It appears as if you were entering a village all the time the people are so thickly settled, none of them owning but a small track of land, while in Ga the farmers own their hundreds and thousands of acres. I have been out in the country today a mile or so from camp and got some butter, 6 lbs. eggs, 2 doz and 1½ gal of milk, qt apple & cow butter and bread for which I paid two dollars, which was very reasonable. I expect to treat all the citizens gentlemanly, so long as they treat me so, the female portion so whether or not.

We have found one cesesh here; the lady has a son in our army and says all her sympathy is with us. Some of our Brigade have brought

in several runaway negroes since I have been writing, they belong to a man near Guineas Station, the boys played off on them and caught the bucks. I have not heard from you since I wrote last, but it is almost impossible as mail facilities are very bad at present. None of us know our point of destination, all are in fine spirits. Write to me often. My love to all. Your son

Lucius T. C. Lovelace



Camp near Shippensburg Penn

June 26th 1863

Dear father,

Though it has only been a few days since I wrote you, I will write again as Dr Cherry leaves for home tomorrow. He arrived here last evening very unexpectedly to all, he has had a very tedious trip of it getting here; as we are moving very near all the time. We left the camp where I wrote you last the next day; and came on this side of Chambersburg and remained there until this morning when we took the line of march for this place which we reached about 10 o'clock AM. We will remain here only for the night; but where we are bound I am not able to say; but we are in the right road for Harrisburg, the Capital which is not more than 35 miles distant. We have not met with any resistance yet; but think we will before we proceed much farther. We are all confident of success and hope to make them feel the affects of the war on their own soil.

I am very anxious to hear from you but we have no mail at this time. I think we will have a regular mail line soon. I hope by transferring the base of war we will have peace soon, though we do not expect to commit such wanton outrages upon them as they have on our citizens for I think we are not mean enough to do so if we had the desire. The boys are all well. The Dr will give you all the news of importance. We are all fairing very well. My love to Mother & Sister. Remember me in your prayers, Your son, Lucius

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*Note:* Pvt. Lucius T. C. Lovelace wrote this letter from Shippensburg, Pa.

Stan ton Va

July the 31 1863

To Mr William Hodnett

dear father I seat my self to write you a few lines to let you now that I am yet in the land of the living, but not well at this time, but knocing about all the time. I am at camp of instruct ion I went to town todey to see Cosen Tom but when I got there I fond that he had been transferd to Roam Georgia 2 of June last Was a Mas ter or Steuard told me that he cold walk about and was a bout well father I saw Mr Ware todey was glad to see him he al so let me hav 10 Dolers I was not qite out I had about 5 Dolers he wold have me take som Money Wel to chang I havent heard from him Sense Crum saw him at the river he Sed that he was goan to his regment that was the last I have heard from him I heard from Brother Jef todey he was at or about Frunt Royal he has given out on the road I hope that he is somewhere that he may write to you I must close nothing now at present W H H Hodnett

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*Note:* Pvt. Hodnett wrote his father on May 23, 1862 from camp near Fredericksburg, Va., "I have no complaint inn our Mess I told you I had been sick I had the feever ever Sense the feight The boys that was taken priseners have got back again they sey the yankes treat ted them well Plenty to eat them that kneeded cloths they gave them cloths."



Camp 46 Near Demopolis Ala Oct 9th/63

Dear Wife I this morning take the pleasure of riten you a fu lins I am well and all the rest of the Boys is well. Susan we never stoped untill we got hear onley at Montgomrey we lay over one day we got hear yesterday a bout 12 We are all Exchanged and nearley all have Guns Our wages have ben taken from us for 2 Month for not coming Sooner though tha may take 2 month more if tha will let me stay with you I bout you a pair of Cards and some Paper and sent it to you They was the best I could get thare Susan me and B R was talking a bout you having a beaf kild and you keeping it all and Driening of it as it would be very good dried if it gets good and fat You can Sell



some if you want to I want you to do as you think best Beef was seling at 50 cents in West point when I come through thare you canot get that much up thare though get all you can The boys is in fine spirits much more so than I expected I dont know for searten who will be our Brigear General though I expect Mr Pettus Our old General Lee has Comand of the Cavalry on Big Black River I am veary sory we lost him though I am in hops that Mr Pettus will be a good General and we will love him You may tel the Boys that I think it best for them to get hear as soon as tha can for we just saved our Self from bein punished We are geting plentey bread and beaf now the boys that have been hear a good while ses that tha have ben geting flour a bout one day in Seven Well I must quit for it is nearley drill time and I have charge of the Company to day for Capten Wright is Ofiser of the day and we have nare lutenant hear. We are in a bad fix for cooking we have nothing to cook in onley 3 tin buckets tha onley do to boil in though I recon we will have somthing be fore long. Susan dont mak ne nare coat untill I send you word I may nead Pants worse than a coat. Good by S.S. W. A. Stephens

Ps Susan dont greave a bout me I dont see the troble you do Susan the boys tels me that tha have ben havin veary good meetins goin on hear in camps W.A.S.

-----  
Note: The 46th Ala. Inf. Regt. was reassigned November 12, 1863, from the command of Brigadier General S. D. Lee, Army of Vicksburg, to Brigadier General Edmund W. Pettus' Brigade, Stevenson's Division, Breckinridge's Corps, Army of Tennessee. There was action at Big Black River Bridge, Mississippi (Vicksburg Campaign) on May 17, 1863.



Clay Hill near Tunnel Hill Ga November 2nd 1863

Mr John Hogg

Dear friend I will write you another short letter to let you know that I have not forgotten you. Jack we are camped not far from the railroad. We have just onsaddle and I am trying to writ Jack you must excuse this letter for it has all the appearance of rain and I am in a hurry. I

had a nice time on my way up here. My health is Tolably good, as I have not bin exposed yet in the weather Though I am fearful that I can not go through with this winter. Jack I have not seen Thomas Rone yet he was taken Sick and left near Guntersville, Ala. The boys say that he was right bad of I could not find out what was the matter with him. The health of the company is verry good and also with the Reg and the Boys are in good heart and seem to be chered with the thought that moves their hearts to cry Victory. Col Hopkins is as plain and lively as ever. Mr. Ellick Piper says tell his folks that he is well as he could expect and would like to see them and tell his children they must be good children and study hard. Old Jim Moore says that he is well and hearty if he just had something to eat and that his shirt is about as black as it was when he came out of Kentuckey. Lou Tennant Hodo sends you his love. Jack I can hear the cannon roaring today pretty rapid. It is from Chattanooga. I expect we will have fighting here in a few days I must close the mail bey is ready. Jack pleas excuse this letter for it was written in a hurry. Give my Love to all the Ladies and if you see my Dina tell her howdy and that I am all sitting. So goodby  
Your friend Thomas L Davidson

To J J Hogg

Direct your letter to Dalton Ga

---

*Note:* Gen. Joseph E. Johnston's army wintered at Dalton, Ga., in 1863-1864. At Ringgold and Catoosa Springs, Ga., were the three corps of Union troops under Gen. George H. Thomas. Johnston's men occupied the pass at Taylor's Ridge, Buzzard Roost Gap and part of the ridge. Tunnel Hill, Ga., was the extreme Confederate outpost toward the Federals. A skirmish occurred here on May 7, 1864.

Pvt. Davidson was a member of Co. D, 3rd Ga. Cavalry Regt., C.S.A. The letter is addressed to Pvt. John J. "Jack" Hogg of the company, probably home on furlough. "Rone" refers to Pvt. Thomas Roan; "Ellick" to Alexander Piper. The joking reference to "Lou Tennant" Hodo is to Lt. John Hodo. "Old Jim" was Pvt. J. M. Moore. Pvt. Davidson married Miss Susan Hogg, a sister of "Jack."

Pvt. John Calvin Davidson, a brother, belonged to the same company. After the war he attended Vanderbilt University studying for the Methodist ministry, and was a well known and respected preacher in this area, in circuit churches and at First Methodist Church, West Point, Ga. Their parents were Elias and Lucretia Jane Leverett Davidson, whose home was in Troup County, near West Point, Ga., and the house still stands.

The regiment went with Wheeler into Kentucky in 1862, with a fine record, but a large part of it was surprised and captured in September, 1862, the prisoners

later being exchanged. In the campaigns of Chicamauga, Chattanooga, Knoxville, Atlanta, and other movements in Georgia, the regiment saw final service in the Carolinas.



Camp 15 miles from Orange  
C. H. on the Rapadan River  
Va. December 5th 1863.

Dear Parents I thank God I am yet spared after going through another Battle. I went through without a scratch. Johnson's Division was all it was engaged in this Battle. The Battle was fought Near Jacobs ford, on Rapadan River. We fought a yankee corps, we drove them back some 3 hundred yds on there left & on there Right a quarter of a mile. Johnson made the attack about hours & a half P.M., fought till dark, on fair open field. 3 of Co I was mortally wounded, 2 slightly. the 3 mortally is dead. I will give there names, Lieut. Cotton MaClinton & Copelen, is dead, Grimet & Wm Cotton slightly, bob Sims was struck with a spent ball on the leg. I broke the tube of my gun the first time I Lay down tell some of the boys got wounded & then Taken one of there guns & proceeded in shooting. I dont know how many Rounds I shot. 138 killed and wounded in the 2nd La. Reg. I Received your Letter the 1st of this month, one from Mr Wilson on the 3rd of this mo. I will answer all letters I have Received when I get Paper. I have been living on hard bread one week. the yankees have crossed back on the other Side of the River. Gen Johnson has whipped Meades Grand army. I say hura for Club Johnson. the yankees loss was heavy. some of our boys have been over the Battle field since the Battle, said we shot about the right highth. Some have dug up the dead yankees & taken off there boots & overcoats, they made it pay. the yankees was not buried deep some of there hands was sticking out. I dont think I shall Rob the dead. I am in good health. I have been in 7 Battles & yet living & doing well. I will call them over, Battle of Dan number one Manassas, Cedar Run, Chancellersville 2 days fight, Winchester one days fight, Gettesburg Pennsylvania 2 days fight & the Battle near Jacobs ford on the Rapadan River. Some count every day they fight a battle. according to that I have been in more than I count for. I must close. no use of bob. I saw it in the paper a boy in Jail in Rockingham Co. Va taken up the first of Nov. Dark mulatto 5 feet 8 inches high bushy head of hair scar over the Right eye, claims to be a free boy from Raleigh N. C. it Describe bob so well I wrote to the Jailor but havent Received any

answer yet. I hope it is him says his name is Wm Henry Jones. If it is him I will find out in a short time. it is getting dark I must close. The weather is verry cold. I have got too good blanketts, you needent send me any coat. I can make out verry well in the coat line. I went in the last Battle with my over coat on. Our Boys faut well. Give my love to all inquireing friends. I will visit the 3rd Ala Reg tomorrow to see Jo Smith. I saw him too weeks ago & Thom Thompson. They wer both in fine health. I will rite moore the next time

Your Son

J. C. Dormon

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*Note:* This letter refers to action which brought General Lee into line of battle along Mine Run late in November, 1863, and General Meade withdrew to go into winter quarters between the Rapidan and the Rappahannock. Johnson's Division was commanded by Major-General Edward Johnson.

The Negro, Bob, was a runaway slave or body servant. Many soldiers were attended by such a servant, especially during the first two years of the war, and some served faithfully to the end. See letter of J. W. Miller, page 111.





# 1864 LETTERS

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Mrs. Nancy E. Barrow  
West Point Troup Cty.  
Ga.

Ala. Conecuh Cty. Jan. 8th '64  
Escambia bridge, 10 o'clock at night.

Dear Wife,

This is the eighth day since I left our camp for this place. I wrote you a letter or rather a little scrip which I have been informed was forwarded to West Point by Lieut. Boyd. I sent it to camp to be mailed on last Sunday by a Mr. Guilder but having business at Pollard on Monday knight I met with Mr. Boyd and he told me that he had the letter and that he would either forward it to you or leave it in the office. I suppose that you have rec'd it ere this time. I am well at this time. I can give you but little news of a pleasant character or of any other kind. I have no writing materials except my pencil and scrap paper as you see that I am writing on with lines, but if I had my pen, ink and paper from camp I feel that I could spend the whole knight in writing and roasting and eating potatoes. I have a great deal of no very great importance to tell you and my children about and I am now by my pine knot fire and my will is good but my means is poor.

I have your letters laying by me bearing the date of the 29th and 30th and will now notice your inquiry's and also your gentle reproof. My socks are good, without a hole in them. My hat or pants I shall not need for a good while yet, in fact I need no article of clothing nor will not soon unless I lose some that I have on hand. You must permit me to correct the mistake about Robert Ellington having the Measles. He has not had them since he has been in camp. He has been regular on duty ever since he has been here except two or three days. Him and all the rest that stay in the cabin with me say that they have had the measles except John West. There has been I think seven cases of Measles in our company or had been when I left. Mr. Barber left our camp this morning, he says that no more cases have occurred since. We have nearly all got the camp itch. It is very troublesome but sometimes when I have a good chance it affords even a luxury to take a general scratching.

I must now mention to you a matter which has produced much excitement in our brigade, and which every true man to his country must feel mortified at.

I have reference to the spirit of mutiny that has developed itself among our soldiers. I cannot pretend at present to give you a full account of it but suffice to say that there were in all probability not less than three hundred men engaged in it. Their object seems to have been to lay down their arms and go home in defiance of any authority whatever.

There was seventy of 57th Regt arrested and sent to Mobile on yesterday. I am also informed that our regiment was sent to Montgomery on Tuesday. There were seven of them also arrested. They are under guard at Pollard. Our company still remain in their quarters. There has not been any of them implicated nor either do I think they will be. It is thought that there is some of every other company that was engaged in the matter.

It is probable that some of the leading characters will be put to death and I think it is also probable that the brigade will be scattered into different parts of the Confederate Army. The position that we are guarding here is considered to be a very important one and I had hoped and still believe that we would in all probability have remained here, but I fear that the step that those reckless and foolish men has taken will cause us to suffer unnecessarily, but I am proud to say that our own company so far as I know is sound even to the core. It is not probable that a brigade, so deeply tainted will be trusted with so important a position. When I return to camp I will give you the particulars more fully.

Tell the little boys that I have not forgot their presents yet though the weather has been so cold and rainy that I have had but little chance to do any thing, and I have nothing to work with but my old pocket knife and a piece of glass bottle. But I will send them some little token of remembrance the first good chance I have. I have not written to your mother for some time but my recollection is that I answered the last letter that she wrote me. You may say to her that there is nothing wrong in my bosom towards her, nor neither do I claim anything from her but her well wishes and prayer in my behalf. I think though when I get back to camp I will write to her and perhaps that will remove all such notions from her mind, but then I thought I had written as often as she had and so I might enquire what I had done that she had ceased to write to me. I hope nothing, if so it has been an error of the head and not of the heart.

Tell Susan and Joe that I want them to continue to write. If they cannot write or dictate the best that is no excuse. I can understand very

well what they desire to communicate. We had here on last Wednesday knight a tolerable heavy sleet. The ground has been considerably frozen ever since. There has also been a great deal of rain lately. My time is out here on bridge guard on the day after tomorrow which is Sunday. I have to stand on guard half of every other knight. Nothing else to do but stand around lightwood fires, cook buck eat and try to keep warm. I sleep but little and have no inclination to do so. It is now a little past 12 OC. I must cease. I fear you will be puzzled to read what I have already written. Farewell, wife and children. Your husband,

Jas. H. Barrow

---

*Note:* This letter is written from the guard camp at the Escambia River bridge of the Mobile & Great Northern Railroad, on the Montgomery-Pollard-Mobile route. The bridge was about six miles south of the Confederate camp at Pollard, Ala., junction of the important Alabama & Florida and Florida & Alabama rail line to Pensacola. The safety of the railroad to Montgomery was of great concern throughout the war, and the importance of the position is noted by the writer. The camp near Pollard was necessary to guard the rail junction and government stores there. If Pollard fell, the way to Montgomery lay open to invasion. Pvt. Barrow was 40 years old at the beginning of the war, and was called into service only after Congress raised the age limit to 45. The first enrollment covered men up to and including those 35 years of age.



General Hospital, June 28 '64

Dear Wife, I Again seat my Self to rite you A few lines. My health is still improveing. They are expecting A great many wounded and Sick Soldiers hear and have sent off A good many to their commands and have furlowed some but not me. They have moved me in the upper ward. My Bowels have got About rite but I dont know how long they will Stay, So I am gaining my Strength very fast. I go to the Table to eat. I am fearful they will send me off before a great while though I cant tell any thing about that. I want to hear from you all an A specially from Tommy. I have ben uneasy about him. Our Company is at Charleston on James Island so I have bin informed. I went out this morning and got a pail of Blackberrys. I think I will come home before I have to leave. Home Sweet Home. My dear take every thing as easy as you can an dont trouble yourself too much About your crop an dont work too much in the hot sun. It might make you sick and that would be worst than to have A Crop of Grass: if you

want your Cane to doo well keep the Suckers pulled off is what Cane makers tell me. They are still fighting yet: Lord grant the Job may soon be over. I feel better now than I have since I left Quincey last December. The Lord has spared my life and My whole trust is in Him. Let us remember Dear Wife, there is many worst cases than mine and let us take courage from that. May the Lord bless you all. You must come as soon as you can.

Yours as ever J. C. Tillery

P.S. Kiss all the children for me. I want some chicken and pies of some sorte.



Atlanter Ga July the 22 / 64

Dear Susan I once more take the pleasure of writen you a fu lins these leaves me well the Co is in tolible health I have not rote to you before in a weeak as thare have ben no mail I dont no the reson as the road is yet all rite to West point I have hearn that General Hood have stoped the mail I dont no that to be the cais though we have had no mail for 6 or 7 day As for what we are a doing I no but little a bout it though thare have ben some veary hard fiten since we have ben hear we taken a bout 3000 Prisners since we have ben hear I think and we have had a heap kild and wonded I cannot hear how meny. Our Brigaid have not ben in non of the hard fiten hear though I fear that we will get in to it yet I can hear it reported that the Yankes is a going back and we have to try to cut of theare sur plies if we try that I fear that we will get in to it deper than we can go with about all the fiten we are a haven now is Picket fiten and sheling, there is a good eal of that going on

I supose that the yankes have ben making a raid through don thare I am sory to heare of it though I am sory to say it though I be leave that we are a bout gon up I dont see any chance for us to drive them back and I fear that we are too Wicked to get help from our Maker I can hardley help from just given up everything when I see how bad we are a doing though I thank the Lord that he have spared my all



most un profitable life I will quit tha have caled for the mail I wish  
I had time to rite more

W A Stephens

-----  
*Note:* Atlanta surrendered to General Sherman September 2, 1864, and was  
burned by him on November 15, 1864.



Camp near Newnan, Ga.

Oct 2nd 1864

Dear Miss Mary,

Your most welcome favor of September came to me Yesterday, & made me very happy in the assurance that you had not forgotten me, & that on reflection you are not disposed to discourage the hopes excited in my bosom by our last conversation. I hope you will never have occasion to think me anything else than right. I am sure you never can think so, as long as I am influenced by the same strong & tender attachment for you that I entertained at the time of our last talk, & which I am sure to cultivate & keep alive as the source of my greatest happiness in the present & in the future. My duties in these trying times makes it impossible for me to see you as often as I would wish, which would be all the time. As it is, I must bear this heavy trial of absence as well as I can; assisted by your letters & the hopes of better & brighter days in that happy future to which you have encouraged me to look. I thank you for what you write about never taking back anything you say. But there is one thing I want you to *take back* after this war is over & keep it with you as long as you live, & that is myself. Will you not promise me that much? We dont know how long we will remain here. There is some talk of our being ordered round to Blue Mountain, Alabama. Any day or hour may increase the distance between us, but let me believe that neither time nor space can separate us so far as to make us forget each other, or prevent us from writing & keeping united in our hearts.

I am very well, more so because you enquire so kindly after my health & hope you are enjoying this blessing of health. Direct your letters to me in this way, Elijah Ford, Co. H, 67th Reg. Ala. Vols, Allen's Brigade, Martins Div. Wheelers Corps, Army of Tenn. and they

will be sure to come to me wherever I am. Let me beg of you to let no chance of writing to me pass by unimproved & be assured, I will never neglect an opportunity of writing to you. Many thanks for the flower. I have stored it away among my most valued things because it will always remind me of you. Come what may forget me not, and remember that you are dearer than all else to him who inscribes himself with great affection & respect always

Elijah Ford

---

*Note:* This love letter was written to Miss Mary Baughan, of Oakland, Ga., a little town and postoffice once near present Gay, Ga. It is on ladies' note paper, 4 x 6", with all edges having a fancy scallop. It is embossed with sprays of blossoms. Miss Baughan later married Mr. Ford, and their daughter, Mattie Katherine (Katie), who died in 1958, married the late Albert H. Stywald of West Point, Ga., in 1911.



Camp Near New Market Va

Oct 10th 1864

My Dear Brother:

Your letter of the 26th of last month has ben received and read with much pleasure. I answered sister Amanda's two last letters that were sent by John Cameron and I wrote to Pa a little over a week ago. You must be sure to answer all my letters and write to me regularly, especially since you have got to be a soldier. I suppose from your letter that your Battalion has been released before this time. I suppose you have all heard most of the particulars of the late battles in the Valley of Virginia by the army under Gen Early, and which resulted rather disastrously to us and caused this army to have to fall back. After the last battle, our army fell back to Port Republic, and from that place to Waynesboro, where we remained two days, and we then moved across the country to the road leading from Staunton to Winchester, and advanced as far as Mt. Sidney. After we had been there a few days, the Yankees began to fall back towards Winchester again, and we followed them as far as this place where we arrived last Friday evening, since which time we have been here in camp. The Yankees have fallen back about twenty miles further, I suppose, and our cavalry has been skirmishing wth them in front for a day or two. I do not know what Gen Early's object was in stopping here. The Yankees have a considerable army here. It is supposed that they received reinforcements from the

Trans-Mississippi Department just before the battle at Winchester, and it is also thought that a part of Sherman's troops had been sent here from Georgia. Our army lost about twenty pieces of artillery in the two battles at Winchester and Fisher's Hill, but we inflicted a very heavy loss in killed and wounded on the Yankees at Winchester. That battle was the severest that Gen Early has fought in the Valley. We had to leave most of our wounded in the hands of the Yankees. When our army fell back, the Yankees burnt nearly all the barns and the grain and the forage for horses that they could find. This place (New Market) is forty three miles from Staunton and forty nine miles from Winchester, the distance between those two places being ninety two miles. The news we have had from Georgia of late has been more favorable than heretofore, and I hope Gen Hood will soon be able to ruin Sherman's army, or else force him to evacuate Atlanta and retreat. We have had very cold weather here for the last few days and this morning we had a considerable frost. I saw Mr. Pharr about two weeks ago, and he was then well. My health is tolerably good at this time. I am anxious to get home, and I hope I will have a chance to get off soon. Tell Henry to write to me and tell all to write. You must be a good boy. Give my love to all. Write to me soon. Affectionately your Bro.

N. W. Miller

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*Note:* The Fourth Battle of Winchester, Va., occurred on September 19, 1864. General Early was driven up the Valley and was defeated at Fisher's Hill, Va., on September 22, 1864.



Charleston S C

James Island Oct 15th '64

My own Dear Nancy, Again I seat myself to address you with A few lines to let you know how I am getting along. My Dear I am doing as well as I can but could doo better if I could get A little more to eat. Our rashons is getting very short. The yellow fever is rageing in Charleston yet. I cant even get stamps to put on my letters. They wont even allow us to go after our mail but it is sent to us every day so you may keep writing. I got A letter from you last week and am looking for another today. I hope I will get one for it would cure the Bluse if there was good noose in it for if I was where I could not hear from you

all it dont seem to me like I could Stand it for you are my dailey Study. The weather is very cold. Some times they say it is very Cold here in the Winter. We still get a little Beef to eat and a little Bread twice a Day. Charleston is set on fire very often by the Yankees big guns. I believe they will burn us up after a while. They have quit shelling us in Camps. We get a small tin cup of flower every 5 days so we could have a Biscuit once A week if we had anything to Shorten it with. Our officers are to be examined next Friday and then we will know whether we will bust or not. If we doo it will be some time before we leave here and I dont know where we will go but I dont yet believe it will bust up and I dont know that we ought to want it to bust for we might get to a worse place. Though our duty is hard it is not like fiting. My Back is geting better, my appetite is very good. I wish I had my overcoat but I dont know how I am to get it. If you send me anything you know what to send as well as I can tell you. Nancy Dear you must do the best you can and it wont be long before we will meet again. Oh that Peace would come in. I could return to my loved ones at HOME. I will write again in a few days. Tell Fanny and John and the children howdy for me. I will close by Subscribing myself your Loveing Husband,

J. C. Tillery

To his Affectionate Wife Nancy Tillery,  
Lizzie and Tommy and Larry Tillery.

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*Note:* The letter is written in ink on both sides blue tablet paper, ruled, size 9-1/4 x 5-3/4". The word "HOME" is embellished with surrounding fancy scrolls of penmanship, as are the words "Lizzie and Tommy and Larry Tillery."

When he says he does not know whether they will "bust or not," he is talking about disbanding of his outfit. Further in this connection, in a letter written October 16, 1864, he says: "Last week there was a petition gotten up by the soldiers of this Battalion wishing the Battalion to disband. This was gotten up unbeknowing to the officers but when it went up to higher authorities it came back to them and they were much displeased about it and said they would arrest all that had put their name to the list and put 5 under guard yesterday but taken them off this morning. I did not sign it for I did not think it would do any good."

Concerning money sent him by his wife, on November 3, 1864, he wrote: "It is no use to me hear for it wont pass. No Georgia nor Alabama money wont go hear." His parents, Mr. and Mrs. Willoughby Tillery, were pioneer settlers of Lee County, Alabama.

Nashville Tenn Dec the 6/64

Dear Susan I am well and doing as well as cold be expected and I am in a bout 2 & ½ m of Nashvill Skurmishing with the yankes I will try to tell you someting of our trip hear we have had to do a heap of hard marching and very short rashons when we landed at Columbia we found the yankes thare we managed to get them to cross the River without charging them though we had to charge them be fore we cold make them leave the river the 46, 31, 23 Ala Regiments crost the river in one of the little pontoon boats and formed them under the banks of the river and then charged them and taken their works Tha then maid a stand at Franklen thare we charged them a gain we lost a grait meny men thare our Divishon did not get thare in time to be ingaiged thare our kild thare was in be twixt 12 and 13 hundred the Enimeys was about 6 or 7 hundred thear works was veary hard to taik thare our men had to go through a large level Plantation be fore geting to their works and then thes men had to help one over the works Oh I cold tel you so much more than I can tell you by riten I forgot to tel you when the fites was the fite at Columbia was on the 29 at Franklen the 1 of Dec

I do hope that this Ware will not last much longer though I see no stoping plais yet. I will tel you a little a bout the weather it is plesant now though cloudey we have had some veary cold weather thare was 2 day that it snowed on us though it did not lay on the grond long as the grond was veary wet though we have sufered a good eal with cold and I fear that we will have to sufer a heap more I do expect that it will be a good while be fore Capt Wright gets to us to give us the leters that he brings. It is the opinion of the most of the men that the yankes will leave hear if tha do I gess that we will winter hear I will close Good by for the presant

W A Stephens

---

*Note:* The river crossing was made on the Duck River, near Columbia, Tenn. Captain John C. Wright was from Randolph County, Ala.





# 1865 LETTERS

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Camp Near Petersburg, Va.

January 16th 1865

My Dear Sister:

I have been intending to write to you for sometime past. For two or three weeks past I have had a great many things to do, and have not had much chance to write to any one except Sudie, and from the uncertainty of the mails of late, I am fearful that but few of the letters I have written have gone through safely. I have received but very few letters from home lately. I send my letters through, and have them mailed in Georgia by every opportunity and I expect to send this letter to Columbus and have it mailed there, by a man of our Regiment who will start home on furlough this evening or tomorrow morning. I thought that I would have been at home before this time, but I have been disappointed in my expectations. I think now that I will get home sometime in February. Congress has passed a Bill to consolidate Companies and Regiments, and I suppose the consolidations will be made sometime soon. My Company is small, and I guess it will be consolidated with some other Regiments. The officers of the new organizations will be appointed. I hardly know yet what my chances are for appointment. I suppose the recommendations of Brigade and Regimental commanders will have a good deal to do with the appointment of officers for the Companies and Regiments. I know that the Colonel of our Regiment would keep me from being appointed if he could, but I think there is great doubt about his getting a position himself. I think it will depend in each case upon the recommendations of Gen. Evans. One reason of the Colonel's hard feelings toward me, is because I have preferred charges against him, for cowardice, and he will no doubt do all he can against me. But if he is brought to a fair trial, I think he will be convicted, and will not have an opportunity of doing anything more. If he gets around these charges in any way, he and his friends may succeed in cutting me out of an office when the consolidation takes place, but I do not think there is much chance for him to do it. I preferred the charge against him because I think the good of the service required it, and no officer ought to hold an office unless he is a brave man. We have completed our winter quarters, and our camp is about nine miles from Petersburg.

The latest letter I have had from Sudie was dated December 30th. I will write to brother Alva again as soon as I can find out at what place to direct a letter to him. The last news I heard from him his command

was about leaving West Point to go to Montgomery. I feel much sympathy for him, and my prayers are for him that he may be preserved and do right. I have not heard from Mr Pharr in over a month. His Division is not camped near ours and I have not heard from any of them in a good while. I am anxious to get the hat which Pa has had made for me, when I get home. I wrote to brother William sometime ago but I suppose had returned to his command before my letter reached West Point. It has been over ten months since I was at home and I am very anxious to get home again. Tell Mary, Carrie, Pussie and all to write to me. Tell Henry he must write too. You must all not forget me in your prayers. Send your letters through by some one coming to the army whenever you have a chance. Write often. Your affectionate brother

N. W. Miller

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*Note:* "Sudie" was Capt. Miller's wife. She was Miss Sudie Little, of Harris County, Ga., before her marriage. Mr. Pharr was a brother-in-law, having married Mary Miller. "Carrie" and "Henry" were a sister and a brother.



Jonsons Island Feb the 22 1865

Dear Susan I once more take the time and pleasure of writing you a fu lins I am well at presant I am in hops that thes may reach you in due time and find you and the children well and the connection, & Friendes I have nothin of intres to rite of intrest Thare is a good meny a leaving hear on exchange I am in hops that it will not stop be fore I can get off this is too Fare from hom for me to live contented though I be leave that I am a bout as well contented as cold be expected the yankes treates us veary well we do nearley as we pleas so we stay in the Pen, I want you to write as soon as you get this you can send a leter through with paing the united Stait's Postig I can pay it hear, you must do the best you can a lone I dont no when I will get to be with you I will get W F McCury draw some money as he goes on if he can, I am in hops that I will get to go home this Spring I will live in hopes if I die in dispare, if we never meat on this side of the Graive I am in hops that we may meat in Heaven Tel Mother that I often think of hear and shead tears noing that she is Old and I hear that she cannot stand up under so much truble tel her to not greave a bout me I do have good health all the time I Pray to the good Lord may stil hold us up that we may be able to stand all the triels we have to

enconter I close for the Presant I recon that you have hearn who all  
of the Co was captured when I was thare was nare one kild that I no  
of Yours truley until Death W A Stephens



Montgomery Ala April 5th 1865

Mr Jacob Miller

West Point Ga

Dear Father, Since the reception of my last letter to you I guess you have been disappointed at my delay in not writing or coming home. We are direct from Selma Ala. Lt Cameron & myself were the only Co officers present in the Selma affair—both here safe. Cousin Clay H. is also here all right—we dont know positively whether we had any members killed or not we had about 20 dismounted members in the ditches—two of that number were not hurt the last account but some may have been wounded or killed afterward—Charlie & Thomas Chivers Corpl J. W. Bonner, Jas P Belcher & J M Bennett were all sick at the Hospital—these 5—& the balance of dismounted men making over 20 were doubtless Captured & are now prisoners. About 40 were very well mounted & are all supposed to be safe but only 15 including Lt C & myself are present here—the balance scattered. Ours was about the last organized Co that left the city & every public road was occupied by the Federals before we got out we also came very near being entirely cut off in the City & were fired at by a body of Yankees who were closing up on the only opening left. Gen Armstrong gave the Co the order in person to leave—Escape from Capture, then being doubtful every man was ordered to take care of himself & get out if possible—which order was strictly obeyed & although under the fire of musketry I dont think any member of the Co was hurt in the retreat or *Stampeded*. One man riding near Lt Cameron was shot off from his horse & thought killed and then one who was with the Co had his horse shot from under him—after getting astride the breastworks we escaped by taking the woods, swamps & plantation roads, through fields & c, passed up close to the river banks, arrived here about sundown yesterday evening. We suppose that a number of the Co have gone home as they had no orders except to escape if possible & had no idea where we would go. Lt Cameron has this evening been to Gen Adams office to know what to do &c. He saw his Adj Genl Maj J Rawle and rec'd instructions to remain here for the present for developments of the Yankee programme &

if in a few days they move in a different direction he has no doubt but Gen Adams will order him to Hickory Flatt Ala or West Point Ga to collect the scattering members & there await the arrival of Col Miller & then proceed with him to the Regt which was in South Carolina the last accounts we had from it. Lt Cooper left in charge of Federal prisoners some weeks since & had gone on to Vicksburg. He had about 25 of the Co with him but they all came back before the fall of Selma—except 2—We rec'd marching orders soon after Lt Cooper left with the prisoners but remained in Selma on account of his absence with the detail—When they got back the city being in danger we were placed on duty to assist in its defence—but the Federal force was too Strong—estimated from ten to twenty thousand, some say 9,000 Cav'y & 11,000 mounted infantry, making a total of 20,000—ours very weak—not over 5,000 at the highest estimate & some say much less and many of them State reserves, County Militia, Citizens & Soldiers who were passing through and pressed into service & also officers of the Quarter Master, Commissary, Ordnance & other Government positions who were also required to shoulder musket & take the trenches—only a part of Gen Forrest's Cavalry were present with him. The losses from all the Classes enumerated were quite heavy some killed, some wounded & many captured, dismounted men nearly all captured. The Artillery Companies lost every piece that they had there & many of their men & those who escaped from the batteries did so by cutting the harness from the horses, mounting them & joining in with the stampede party—all going—"helter Skelter" every man for himself. A considerable portion came directly to this place. Gen Forrest issued verbal orders for his Command to rendezvous at *Centerville, Ala.* where there was so much confusion many failed to get the order & proceeded to this place— Gen Adams & escort came here. We were with them a part of the time yesterday. Major Rawle today told Lt Cameron that if all had acted as well as his Co there would have been no stampede—others think that if the forces had all remained in good order the whole force would have been captured, as the Federals were so well equipped & furnished & all veteran troops & in such overwhelming numbers that the place could have been completely invested & escape of any rendered impossible if we had delayed any longer. Most of the Co lost nearly all their Clothing—I lost all except what I had on my person. Our Commanders were deceived in the Strength of the enemy & the fall of the City so quick was unexpected & being on Scout & Courier & other duty when baggage was rather in the way we had deposited everything not needed while out on duty & the Capture of the City was so sudden that we had not time to do anything except try to save ourselves. My clothing 3 blankets & other articles & also Lts. Cameron & Cooper's luggage was left with Mrs.



Johnson. She will conceal & keep the Yanks from getting them if possible. The Co papers, orders &c, she also has them or at least were left with her to take care of. Lt. Cameron, Milledge, Hart & Charlie Chivers & J M Bennett each lost a negro—they even all anxious to escape—but being on foot were directed to hide or escape if they could, if not watched too close & forced to stay. Lt Cameron's boy Zeph will be sure to escape from them & come to him—it is also thought by members who are best acquainted with the others that they will do the same. We lost only a few horses, probably a half dozen. I have a twelve days leave of absence dated 23d ult. but on account of the emergency have made no effort to be relieved from duty—dont know when I will come home—but perhaps soon—probably in a few days, as it is getting late I must close—give my love to all and remember me always at a Throne of Mercy. (Written in haste) Your son, J W. Miller

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*Note:* Co. officer (Lieut. or Capt.) John William Miller was a member of the 9th Mississippi Cavalry, commanded by Col. H. H. Miller, and in Chalmer's Division, Brigadier General Wirt Adams' Brigade. He was born August 14, 1833, and died June 25, 1868. Buried Lovelace Family Cemetery, Troup County, Ga.



West Point, Geo.

April 6th 1865

Hon. J. C. Breckinridge

Secty. of War

Sir, Having had one arm amputated at shoulder joint, and believing that I am no longer in condition to serve my country profitably, I hereby tender my resignation as Capt. of Co. "F" 61st Ala. Regt., Battle's Brig., A. of N. Va.

Respectfully,

A. F. Zachry

Capt. Co. F, 61st Ala Regt

### *Endorsement*

Sr. Surg. Chg. Hospitals

West Point, Ga.

Apl. 6, 1865

Having carefully examined the above named officer, I find that he has his left arm amputated at shoulder joint. His general health is very feeble. I recommend that his resignation be accepted.

J. W. Oslin

Sr. Surg. Chge.

-----  
*Note:* Undoubtedly the war ended before any action was taken on this letter of resignation. Alfred Flournoy Zachry was born March 4, 1819 and died July 27, 1868. He is buried in Pinewood Cemetery, West Point, Ga. He married Miss Arabella A. "Belle" Lanier, of West Point, Ga., in 1863.



Petersburg Va   April 28th '65

Fair Grounds Hospital

My Dear Father:

I wrote to you on the 27th of last month. I have been wanting to write to you again but as I have been quite weak & have suffered so much & have had to be flat on my back & I could not write much. I will have a chance to send this letter to Ga. by Gen Gordon & as I feel a good deal better today I will try to write you a short note as it is not convenient to get any one to write for me.

I was wounded on the 25th March. The Surgeons put me under the influence of chloroform on the 27th to ascertain the extent of the injury & they amputated my leg. They said it was necessary as the bone just above my knee was badly fractured & the boney joint was too badly injured to be saved. My leg sloughed off a little soon after it was amputated which threw me back some. I have suffered a great deal & still suffer some nearly all the time. I get very good attention & am attended to by our own Surgeons who staid here with our wounded. The

ladies are also very kind to bring us everything they think we want to eat.

*Saturday evening April 29*

Dear Father: I will try to finish this letter this evening. Dear Pa, I pray for you every day & for all of my sisters and brothers & I know you will remember me in my afflictions in all your prayers. In all my suffering the Good Lord has been & is still my trust & my comfort & consolation. This consolation & Grace is the chief comfort I have. I hope it is the Good Lord's will that I will soon be well enough to get home & see you all again, but whether I recover or not I feel that the Lord will be with me & provide for me & it will all be the best for me in the end—I had a letter written to Sudie a day or two ago. I have been very nervous since I have been wounded & it make me nervous to write—Remember me in your prayers. Afft. Your Son N. W. Miller

-----  
*Note:* This letter is written in pencil on one torn sheet of tablet paper, unbleached, folded, size 10 x 7- $\frac{3}{4}$ ." The handwriting is imperfect and shows nervousness. It is scarcely recognizable as coming from the former firm hand. The envelope has "Due" in manuscript and is addressed to Mr. Jacob Miller, West Point, Ga. Nicholas Wesley Miller was born November 24, 1836, and died June 5, 1865. He is buried in Lovelace Family Cemetery, Troup County, Ga.



# NURSES' LETTERS OF 1865

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	Fair Grounds Hospital, Petersburg, Va.	

Petersburg Va June 6/65

Mr Jacob Miller  
West Point Ga

Dear Sir      It has fallen to my lot to convey to you the sad intelligence of death of your son Capt Miller. I was with him in his last moments and assure you that he was perfectly resigned to death when too weak he requested me to pray for him and I am happy to state that he departed this life as a christian should. He wore a pleasant smile during his last illness and bore his sufferings with meekness patience & fortitude although prepared for and expecting death yet he had strong hopes of getting well and seeing you all again. His wound I think was the cause of his death hastened probably by diarrhea. He had all the attention requisite and requested me to give you this information.

Your friend,    Mrs. Nannie A. Pond



Petersburg Va  
June 6th 1865

My dear Mrs. Miller:

Ere you read this letter you will have received the mortal remains of your *beloved & noble* husband; had prayers & efforts availed to save him, the hope held out in a previous letter to you through Lt. Grogan would have been realized; but our Father who orders all things wisely & well, has decreed it otherwise, & with bleeding but submissive hearts, we must bow to *His* will. Knowing that every incident connected with his last illness & death will be of deep interest to you, I have readily complied with the request of his brother to contribute thus far to your comfort under this severe & deep affliction.

My acquaintance with him commenced about the 5th of April, his wound had been received March 25. Col. Lowe of N. C. had been brought to our home on that day, wounded in same battle, & his case demanded my care until he left. Immediately I commenced visiting the Confederate Hospital in the city, which at that time needed our care, as the evacuation followed by occupancy of the enemy threw all things into disorder & consternation, & but few ladies ventured into the streets,



but I was enabled to continue my daily visits; I in the above hospital formed the acquaintance of Adj. McFarlan & Lt Grogan. Your dear husband was recommended to my care by them, as being in the Fair-Ground hospital about a mile from my residence. I immediately went in search of him & was soon at his bed-side; I saw at once from the extreme delicacy of his appearance, that his case required the utmost care & attention, while my perception of character, also taught me that sympathy & kindness were *equally* necessary; greater tenderness of spirit I have never seen, "*even in woman*," the most ordinary acts of humanity would call tears to his eyes, & every offering of friendship would be received with a beaming smile of gratitude, that seeing he so keenly appreciated the presence & attention of our sex, I carried many to his bed-side, who were invariably attracted by his lovely character, & ever made him a special object of their attention. The sufferers around him evinced the greatest interest in him, & *even the Yankee nurses* shared in the general fascination; I mention all this, that your mind may be relieved of all unnecessary fears as to his want of care; he began to rally & gain strength after the wound commenced healing, & ate the various delicacies taken to him, with a keen relish. My first care each morning was to select whatever I could command for his special benefit, to take it to him & to sit by his side to cheer & encourage him. He would often *need* this, as his thoughts would wander to her, he so dearly loved, yet who was so far distant, in this hour of trial & suffering; he often spoke of you in the *tenderest* manner, & almost the first thing he did, when I found him in the hospital was to show me your likeness, which was lying by his side. Up to the time I wrote you he was gradually gaining strength & for a week or ten days afterwards, I felt assured that he would recover, as I wrote you. After giving the letter to Lt. G. I told him of the confidence with which I had written, and he said "you ought not to have been so confident, I may yet grow worse"—but still the symptoms were too favorable, that I could not & *would* not believe otherwise, until the fatal disease attacked him, which *defied* every effort to arrest its course—His diet was strictly attended to, & he was very cautious himself. I recommended him to the notice of the Chief Surg. who had him removed at my suggestion, to another ward where there were fewer patients, & but one bad case. The Matron was also more attentive; under all the circumstances I suppose no one ever received better attention, & I am *very sure* that no one has ever been more deserving of it. What a blessing it is too, that God should send his dear brother to him in his last moments to watch for, & supply every want, to soothe & nurse him with almost a mother's tenderness—he was a great comfort to him, as he was to me—for a great burden was removed

from my heart when I for the first time found him at his bed-side, I knew then that he was safe both day & night in a brother's care.

On Saturday afternoon, he turned to me while his brother was absent for a short time, & said, "I must die, but I am willing. I am ready, oh! come Jesus, come now— Oh! Mrs. Wyche I dread nothing but the pangs of death." I said, "God can enable you to *bear* them or make them *light* & remember too what Jesus suffered for us—" he assented to this & seemed perfectly calm & resigned, nay, happy in the thought; the next day he said he was much better, & felt that he would recover, but we saw it was a false hope, & his brother who was weeping just out of his sight asked me to let him know the truth, that he might learn some message for you. He found out that his brother was weeping & tried to cheer him with the hope of his recovery, could not bear to see him troubled—I then told him what I thought of his condition, at the same time said that all things were possible with God. He still said "I am ready at any time, but I *do* feel better." I told him that perhaps God was giving him a quiet entrance into eternity in answer to prayer—"Have you a message for your wife, if you should be mistaken in your impressions?" I said; he replied, "tell her I love her dearly, she has *ever* been a good wife to me—and she must meet me in heaven." This was the last conversation I had with him, but oh! is it not rich in comfort & hope to you—for myself it was a *privilege* to sit by his side, & note the gradual departure of a spirit so full of holy assurance & love, Oh! so different from many I have watched over in similar circumstances; & cannot you now in this sad moment of your bitter bereavement, look up with tearful yet trustful & rejoicing eyes to that *rest* into which the way-worn soldier & pilgrim has entered & whither you will one day follow him! May God enable you to do so—confiding all things for *time* & eternity into his hands; I deeply regret that I could not be with him to the last but I did not leave my bed until it was too late to see him, & now I am so nervous that I can scarcely write you legibly—yet I could not suffer this opportunity to pass without assuring you of my deep & heartfelt sympathy. I am giving you these details, which I know will be so gratifying to you— & now with the fervent prayer that God, from his abundant fulness, will mete out to you every temporal & spiritual blessing, as well as to his dear father & other bereaved ones, I am, dear Mrs Miller,

Your Stranger-friend,  
(Mrs.) H. F. Wyche

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*Note:* This letter is written in ink on two folded sheets of lined notepaper size 8-7/8 x 8". All sides are covered in a small, distinctive and attractive feminine handwriting.

# LETTERS OF CONFEDERATE SURGEON J. W. OSLIN

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Head Qtrs 37th Ala Regt

Columbus Miss

June 30th 1862

Bro Dormon—

It becomes my painful duty to inform you that Wiley died this morning at Sun rise— I wrote you several days ago in order to prepare you for the sad event. I cannot give particulars for the want of time. I will write you fully hereafter. Suffice it to say that he had kind and constant attention during his sickness— I have done all I could to render his condition comfortable. It will be cheering to know that he died in peace— He asked for his Mother the last word he spoke— I will write as soon as I can again— The sick require my constant attention.

Yrs truly

J. W. Oslin —

N B —

Wiley cannot be sent home now— I will have him burried decently— He can be moved home in winter— His grave shall be carefully marked—

O—

Dr B—

Will send this note to Mr D as soon as possible— Say to wife that I am *very* well— Let me hear from you— In haste

Oslin

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*Note:* Pvt. Wiley M. Dormon, was a member of "McCurdy Rebels," 37th Regt. Ala. Vols., organized at Auburn, Ala., in spring of 1862. He was born May 21, 1840 and died June 30, 1862 of pneumonia at Camp Bluet, near Columbus, Miss. This letter, and other Dormon letters, from Pvt. Dormon's niece, Lessie Lawson Eneas (Mrs. W. J.), Chapel Hill, Chambers County, Ala.

Atlanta Geo  
Feby 11th '64

Sir,

I am directed by Surgn. S. H. Stout to call on you for any *Hospital bunks* that you may have on hand not in use. You will please address me by *return mail* at West Point, Geo. informing me of the *prices* No. you can furnish me, also inform me if there is any other Hospital furniture that you can let me have. Are there any cooking utensils not in use? You will please ship the *bunks immediately* to my address at West Point.

Respectfully,

J. W. Oslin  
Surg. P.A.C.S.

Post Surgn.  
LaGrange (Ga.)

---

*Note:* Prior to the war, Dr. John Wimbish Oslin practiced his profession in conjunction with a drug store in LaFayette, Ala. In January, 1859, he announced in *The Chambers Tribune* that he had secured the services of "Dr. Brown," and had sold his interest in the drug store to Dr. Brown, whose services were available for cases of emergency and consultation, all prescriptions to be filled by either Dr. Brown or himself, at all hours. Dr. Oslin stated that he was "now prepared to devote my entire attention to the practice of medicine."

In March, 1862, he was elected 1st Lieutenant in Capt. Talbot's Company, Alabama Volunteers, at LaFayette, Ala., which subsequently became Co. I, 37th Regt. Ala. Inf., organized May 13, 1862. He was appointed Regimental Surgeon on May 26, 1862, at Columbus, Miss. In the winter of 1862 he was relieved from field duty due to bad health the result of "chronic diarrhoea." In May, 1863, he was relieved of duty as Post Surgeon at Vicksburg, Miss., and ordered to report to the Medical Department. Major Oslin was assigned to duty at the Post of West Point, Ga., by Surgeon Samuel H. Stout, Medical Director and Superintendent of Hospitals in the Department of the Tennessee.

The Reid Hospital, West Point, Ga., was organized in late 1863-early 1864, and Dr. Oslin was Senior Surgeon in Charge of the hospital until the close of the war.

Kate Cumming, author of *Hospital Life in the Confederate Army*, visited the hospital in August, 1864, and recorded in her journal: "We visited the hospital, and the post surgeon, Dr. Oslin, was delighted to see us, for though not personally acquainted we knew each other well from reputation . . . Every hospital in the place was filled with wounded and sick, and in the event of a battle we did not see how they could be removed."

The "battle" Miss Cumming feared occurred at West Point on Easter Sunday,



April 16, 1865, a week after General Lee had surrendered, unknown here at the time. An arm of General Wilson's Union cavalry raiders, coming from their desolation of Selma, Ala., and surrender of Montgomery, divided and headed toward West Point and Columbus, Ga. At the latter city, a battle was fought on the same day at Girard, Ala., across the Chattahoochee River from Columbus, before Columbus surrendered with great loss of stores.

At West Point, the last Confederate fort to fall in the war surrendered after an eight hour assault by the raiders. Railroad and wagon bridges across the Chattahoochee River were burned, and supplies loaded on 340 railroad cars, including 19 engines, were destroyed near West Point, before the force moved eastward to Macon, Ga., on the 17th. At Columbus and West Point, where almost all of the rolling stock of the Montgomery & West Point Rail Road and the Atlanta & West Point Rail Road had been withdrawn, destruction of their equipment put these rail lines out of operation.

The earthwork fort was constructed on the crest of a hill in Chambers County, Ala., on the west side of the river, adjacent to and overlooking West Point and the bridges. Commanded by Brigadier General Robert C. Tyler, who was slain in the battle, it was named Fort Tyler in his honor, for he had sworn to defend the Confederate flag presented him by the ladies of the town with his life.

Accounts vary as to the number of men defending the fort, ranging from 121 to 265 of the official Union report. The small military contingent of Confederates consisted of men of Pointe Coupee Louisiana Battery, Stuarts Corps; Ferrell's Battery; Waite's Battery, South Carolina; local Georgia Militia; schoolboys, old men, citizens and convalescents from Reid Hospital, as well as a few unattached or soldiers on leave. Prisoners taken were sent to Macon, Ga.

The fort was besieged and assaulted by Colonel Oscar H. LaGrange, of Wisconsin, commanding the Second Brigade, First Division, Cavalry Corps, Military Division of the Mississippi, numbering over 3,000 men. After General Tyler was killed, and Capt. C. Gonzales, succeeding in the command was killed, the fort was commanded by Col. J. H. Fannin, of LaGrange, Ga., who had brought 18 men with him from LaGrange that day to assist West Point.

In Col. LaGrange's official report, Confederate losses are given as 18, including General Tyler, 2 captains and 1 lieutenant, with 28 seriously wounded, mostly shot through the head; 218 prisoners, with Union loss 7 killed and 29 wounded.

He also states that "7 hogsheads of sugar, 2000 sacks of corn, 10,000 pounds of bacon and other stores were left in charge of the Mayor, (L. S. Means) to provide a hospital fund for both parties, with instructions to distribute any excess among the poor."

Dr. Oslin was Surgeon in Charge of Hospitals, with S. W. Caldwell, Surgeon, H. D. Heard, Assistant Surgeon, and L. Stevens, Assistant Surgeon, making up his staff.

After the war, Dr. Oslin continued his medical practice in West Point, and was prominent in civic and church affairs for a number of years. His daughter, Annie Oslin Crawford, (Mrs. T. T.) now 96, lives at Los Angeles, Calif. She is a member of Chattahoochee Valley Historical Society. Dr. Oslin is buried at Gainesville, Ga.

Reid Hospital  
West Point, Geo.  
April 13 1864

Sir,

The note I addressed you by Mr. W. B. White, informing you that certain attendants had been relieved from duty in this Hospital and ordered to report to you, has been returned, asking upon what authority or instructions they were relieved. You will remember that I informed you a short time since that I had one or two very inefficient attendants, requesting you at the same time to send me some competent men and that I would order them, (the inefficient attendants) to report to you for assignment elsewhere. You immediately sent me down three more attendants. Believing that the matter would be fully understood, I at once ordered Mr. Beard & Smith to report to you.

In the case of Hosp'l Steward W. B. White, Surg. Meiffee (?) had made the enclosed application for him, and having another Superior Druggist (or Hospital Steward) I concluded *unthoughtedly* to send him up to you for orders. I am fully aware of the *error* I committed—There was no intention on my part to disregard the authority of my Superior Officer. I beg your kind indulgence for the offense, in future I will be more careful.

Respectfully  
J. W. Oslin  
Surg. Chge.

Surg. S. H. Stout  
Director of Hosp'ls  
(Macon, Ga.)

---

*Note:* This letter and letter of April 27, 1865, included through courtesy of Col. Thomas Spencer, Atlanta, Ga.



Reid Hospital  
West Point, Ga.  
April 27th 1865

Sir,

In obedience to verbal instructions from your office, immediately after my arrival at this Post, I dispatched a trusty messenger to Columbus, Geo. with instructions to report to Surg. Douglas. I at the same time addressed Surgeon Douglas an official note, by your order, requesting him to furnish promptly a report of the Hospital Dept. in Columbus & such other information as he might think advisable. Surg. Douglas having left the city, the messenger reported to Surg. Carlisle, Surg. in charge who sent by him the enclosed papers.

I have relieved Ast. Surg. Mayes and the attendants from Academy Hospital and ordered them to report to Surg. Saunders at Lithonia. I am reorganizing as rapidly as possible. Will soon be under full sail again. Have plenty of provisions for several months to come.

Asst. Surg. Mayes is entitled to much credit for the amt. of Hospital property he succeeded in saving. I am gathering up a few articles every day. Could recover a large amt. if I had a guard. I have a promise of fifty men today. I will report promptly from time to time, my progress in getting up Hospital property.

I am Sir  
Your obt Ser't

J. W. Oslin  
Sr. Surg. Chge.

Surg. S. H. Stout  
Med. D. Hospitals

---

*Note:* Academy Hospital was at Chattanooga. After the evacuation, it was moved to Marietta, Ga., then to Atlanta. Later, it was moved to Forsyth, Ga., thence Auburn, Ala.; to Corinth, Miss., and finally returned to Auburn, Ala., as the war progressed and ended. Dr. Dudley D. Saunders, with a few hospital employees, tents and supplies, left Auburn for West Point as Wilson's Cavalry advanced from Montgomery.

## OLD OAKBOWERY

*by*

BESSIE THOMAS LOVE

In 1828, the United States consisted of twenty-four states. John Quincy Adams was President; Alabama was nine years old, with its capitol at Tuscaloosa, and John Murphy was governor. Chambers County and LaFayette did not exist—their present boundaries were in deep forest, occupied by the Creek Indians.

Into this country that same year came a party of settlers from Spartanburg, Abbeville and Anderson counties, South Carolina. In Elbert County, Georgia, they were joined by others. This group made up what is believed to have been the first settlers to locate at Oakbowery. From South Carolina came the Rev. Sam Jones (grandfather of the evangelist), Garret Morris and his son, Andrew Jackson Morris, (aged 22), Joseph Ward Cook, and Caswell Earp.

From Georgia came Webb Kidd, a young man about twenty, and Thomas Allen, who had formerly lived in Virginia.

After weeks of travel over Indian trails, camping out and keeping bonfires all night to ward off wild animals, they came to the place of their choice; and on this site there developed the almost forgotten town of Oakbowery, Alabama.

These early men of valor were all Methodists; all were educated, and most of them, and those who followed immediately after them, were people of some means. They brought with them slaves, good horses, work oxen, tools, and seed.

Having selected their home sites, they next erected cabins; then cleared land which was incredibly rich, and by the end of the summer there were lush crops.

In twenty short years, Oakbowery, from a complete wilderness, without roads, became a flourishing town of wealth and culture, with a fine church, two colleges, a postoffice, Masonic Lodge, (Oakbowery Lodge No. 108), a tan yard, a tailor, a milliner, a shoe shop, slave

market, blacksmith shop, and gristmill. Some pieces of fine furniture made in the cabinet shop are still in existence.

From 1840 to 1850, Oakbowery had prospered to the extent that the people built many fine homes, for those days, palatial, and a few of these still stand.

Throughout its history, the life of Oakbowery centered around the Methodist Church. Four years after the first settlers came, a missionary, Sidney Squires, was sent into that area from the South Carolina Methodist Conference. He rode horseback through the forests, and whenever he came upon a few settlers he formed a group, called a "society." This he did at Oakbowery in 1835. That group met at Webb Kidd's store. They were the first members of the Oakbowery Methodist Church, and the "society" consisted of eight people. Webb Kidd was Member No. 1, and his wife, Rebecca Allen Kidd, was No. 2.

From this small group grew the Oakbowery Methodist Church, which, in a few years, erected a beautiful church building, with a congregation of several hundred members. It became a power for good in the Methodist Church at large, not only in Chambers County but Alabama.

The first church building, of course, was a log cabin, and later a larger and better building of logs was built. About 1848, twenty years after the first settlement, a beautiful white frame church was built on the site of the present Oakbowery Methodist Church. This was in a large grove of magnificent oaks; and it is said that one of the members remarked that it looked like a "bowery," so the place came to be called Oakbowery, the name later designated, and as one word, in the incorporation of the town in 1850.

This church building, which was famous for its beauty and fine fittings for many years, was burned in 1896. It was a long building, with many windows. Across the front was a long porch with fluted columns, supporting the roof. There were steps at each side, and ladies customarily entered on the right, the gentlemen on the left.

Inside there was a center aisle, with a rich red carpet, leading to the altar and pulpit. Pews were of dark, polished wood, probably native walnut. In the back was a balcony, reached by stairs on each side. This was for the slaves, who were required to attend services with their owners. The church was lighted by candles in two magnificent crystal chandeliers.



The building was surmounted by a tall steeple, with a bell that was rung to summon the people to worship. This bell was tolled throughout the funeral of any member. It could be heard for a mile away. The old church cemetery was about a half mile distant, on the right of the road towards Gold Hill. A later cemetery, surrounded by an iron fence, and still used, is across the road from the old cemetery.

From 1832 to 1845, Camp Grounds were established and maintained by the Methodist Church. There was one near Oakbowery, which was used until about 1885. An annual meeting was held, usually late in summer. These Camp Grounds were all similar, well located in an oak and hickory grove, near a good spring.

For meetings, there would be a large shed, sometimes built of brush, and sometimes of rough plank. The floors were earthen, covered with straw. There was a platform, with an altar railing, and the structures were open on all sides. Some of the people had cabins of rough plank, but a great many had large tents of canvas, some being 30 to 40 feet long, with a corridor down the middle. Each side was divided into cells, with raised floor of plank. At night, curtains were hung in the doorways of the cells, and the floor piled high with sweet smelling hay, over which blankets were spread. Every place was occupied by as many as could crowd in.

The tent (or bower) where services were held, was about 100 feet square. If the benches did not accommodate the crowd, people sat on the clean straw on the floor, and stood outside under the shade trees, from where they could hear easily, as the tents were open on all sides, and the preachers exhorted in mighty voices. Services were held four times a day.

These Camp Meetings were great occasions, frequently the annual visit, and the only entertainment for many attending. The preaching was eloquent, and inspiring, and excellent singing added to the occasion. Tent holders entertained without charge all who came—some from the hills and woods; from far and near; the rich and the poor. Some came afoot; women and children in ox carts; some rode horseback, and often there would be two or three on one old nag.

The wealthy came in their carriages, making a great display, the shining harness, polished wooden sides and lamps glittering. They were four-wheeled vehicles, hung on heavy springs. The outside showed various hardwoods, and inside two padded seats faced each other, usually

covered with silk or satin. At the front was a high seat occupied by the driver, a slave, very proud of his position. Beside him usually sat a slave maid who was the personal attendant of the ladies who rode inside.

Drawing the carriages were usually a pair of matched horses, from fine, blooded stock, as good horses were the pride and joy of the well-to-do. Gentlemen of the family rode horseback ahead of the carriages, and to the rear came slaves, riding mules, or other stock. All were dressed in their best. With a barbecue going from day to day, and slaves to cook and serve, there was a week long feast.

The Camp Meetings were never to be forgotten occasions, highlighting the year and lives of those attending. The converts, and there were many, were admitted to the church of their choice. Membership from these meetings added largely to the growth of the Oakbowery Methodist Church.

The leading citizens of Oakbowery, all well educated men, were early concerned with providing schools. Other than the teaching done in private homes there was often an "old field" school. This was a rude log cabin, with two small windows, and usually rough plank benches. Children were taught here, eight hours daily, generally by a young man who was saving his pay to get further schooling for himself. His pay averaged about five dollars a week, contributed by the patrons of the school, each paying according to the number of his children attending school. The teacher was given his board by the patrons, in whose homes he stayed alternately a week at a time. Boys were taught Mathematics, Greek, Latin, and English Literature. The girls were taught only to read and write. The writing taught was penmanship, such as is no longer seen, but how well it was taught is testified by the beautiful script shown in the old documents and letters that remain with us today.

At Summerfield, Alabama, a Conference on Education was held by the Methodists on July 15, 1848. This was largely attended by preachers and laymen, and a committee was appointed to report the number and grades of schools to be established, and the endowment needed. It was recommended that an Institution be established at Oakbowery, with buildings and grounds in good condition, and a suitable endowment was voted for this purpose.

On February 1, 1849, this school, known as the Oakbowery Female Institute, was opened under the control of the Methodist Church. The school became well and widely known, and it is said that more than

fifty families moved to the Oakbowery neighborhood to secure for their daughters the excellent instruction offered there.

The first president of the Oakbowery Female Institute was the Rev. George Washington Chatfield, a native of Wilkes County, Georgia. Educated for the law at Emory University, he had practiced for several years at Greenville, Georgia, and had served in the Georgia Legislature. He was licensed as a Methodist preacher about 1840.

Rev. Chatfield served as pastor of the Methodist Church at LaFayette when the Institute was established, and he was elected its president. He held the position three years then was elected to a professorship at Auburn. Miss Emily Bailey was his assistant at the Institute when it opened, and Miss Mary F. Williams taught Music and French to the girls.

The Trustees of the Oakbowery Female Institute were John M. Jones, Robert Mitchell, James F. Dowdell, Charles Bilbro, Henry M. Todd, John B. Glenn, and T. J. Williamson. W. W. Kidd and James Maddox were soon added as Trustees, and an appeal was made to the Church for additional funds to enlarge the school.

The college buildings stood in the grove near the present Oakbowery Methodist Church. These were large, white, frame buildings, with a corridor through the center, and class rooms on each side. The music building had an auditorium and a stage. It was from this stage that Sam P. Jones, who later became the world famous Methodist evangelist, made his first public speech at the age of four, declaiming:

*"In days to come,  
In thunderous tones,  
The world will hear  
Of Sam P. Jones."*

The school was reorganized in 1854, with Rev. Alexander Speer as president, and continued in operation until the Civil War. At that time the buildings were in bad condition, the Methodist Church withdrew its support, and the school closed. The building remaining in best condition, the Music Hall, was operated as a private school for boys and girls until 1876 or somewhat later.

In the meantime, another college had been established at Oakbowery, the East Alabama Masonic Institute, a school for young men. Also

located in an oak grove, about one quarter of a mile from the girls school, one of the buildings is still in use as a Methodist Church for negroes. Adjacent to the church there is still standing a small, two-story frame building that was the home of Oakbowery Masonic Lodge, No. 108.

This school was locally known as the "Men's College," and instruction seems to have been on college level, with stress on Latin, Greek and Mathematics. A number of students from this school became prominent in the Methodist Church and Alabama. When the Civil War began, its principal was William F. Slaton, whose son, John M. Slaton, became Georgia's governor in 1913.

The people of Oakbowery, staunch Methodists for the most part, were greatly interested and disturbed by news reaching them from New York City in 1844. At a General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, held from May 1 to June 10, 1844, an event occurred that agitated the whole country and brought about the separation of the Methodist Church, North and South.

At this Conference, it was voted to dismiss Bishop James O. Andrews, of Georgia, from his office, because he had married a lady who owned a few slaves!

At the local level, a Quarterly Conference was held at Oakbowery August 10, 1844, with 44 members present, adopting the following resolution:

"RESOLVED: That we recognize obedience to the laws of the land as a high moral duty, binding upon every good citizen, and that any act of an ecclesiastical judiciary, bringing the Church into a position antagonistical to the State, is arrogant and revolutionary, and fit only to be repudiated and denounced by all good Christians."

Life in Oakbowery, one hundred years ago, was interesting and full, even exciting. Plantation business was a twenty-four hours a day occupation to all concerned. At daylight each morning the plantation bell rang to assemble the slaves in the lane leading to the barns. The overseer or the master gave them their instructions for the day's work, and tasks were assigned.

Sounds of a plantation awakening and bustling to its work each day were unique, as during this time there ensued shouting, barking of hounds, neighing of numerous horses waiting to be fed, the flutterings of chickens, turkeys and guineas underfoot.



After the confusion died down, the slaves returned to their cabins for breakfast with their families, then went about their allotted tasks. Some hoed crops, some plowed, and some split rails. Those slaves trained to special work went about other tasks. Among these would be the blacksmith, who forged horseshoes, plowshares and farm implements from iron sheets heated on the forge. He was usually assisted by a slave boy, pumping the large bellows blowing the charcoal fire to turn the iron white hot for cutting and shaping.

Some blacksmiths were gifted artisans, turning out not only farm tools, nails and implements, but hardware, hooks, and intricate ironwork of an ornamental type. Others were skilled carpenters and cabinet makers, producing quantities of furniture used in the area.

Except for sugar and coffee, large plantations in the early days of Oakbowery were almost completely self-sustaining, everything else needed for daily living being produced on the place. The mistress, her daughters, and women slaves trained in the work, spun the thread from which cotton, mixed wool and cotton (called linsey) were woven. In dyeing the thread, various colors were obtained using native herbs and bark.

Weaving was done in a separate building, called the loom house, generally at some distance from the "Big House," or dwelling of the family. In the loom house were kept the looms, spinning wheels, reels for winding the thread, cards for carding cotton and wool. Large cutting tables were provided for spreading the work, and all sewing was done by hand. Slaves were usually clothed in brown or blue homespun, although some unbleached cotton (osnaburg) was used. Clothing of the well-to-do families was all made of imported materials, gentlemen wearing broadcloth, ordered by the bolt, and made up by the local tailor.

Old photographs and portraits show that the ladies of Oakbowery were elegantly dressed in antebellum days. Their best dresses were of silk, satin and velvet for cool weather, and for summer, dimity, mull and organdy. All these materials were imported, and local people secured it from merchants in Charleston, New York and New Orleans. All dresses were made by local dressmakers, and it took ten to twenty yards of the usually narrow width materials.

Country life was enlivened by visits from relatives and friends, who stayed for weeks, and sometimes months at a time. Picnics, barbecues and dances were given to introduce the visitors to the neighbors. Spend



the night parties were also popular pastime for young ladies. Although dancing was frowned upon by the Methodist Church, dances were sometimes held in private homes.

Most of the planters of Oakbowery owned slaves, and near the cross-roads a slave market stood for a time. Occasional dealers came with their human wares and a sound slave sold for about five hundred to one thousand dollars.

The problem of feeding their usually large families, and the dependent slave population, was an ever-present one to the planters of Oakbowery. All farms grew food crops, striving to be as self-sustaining as possible. There were fine orchards and vegetable gardens. In addition, beef, hogs, sheep and poultry were raised for the food supply of their households. This was in the day before canning and refrigeration, but Oakbowery lived well on the products of its farms. Cured meats, sausage, lard and pickled beef in barrels of brine were available at all times from the family smoke house.

For bread, Oakbowery grew its own wheat and corn. Taken to the local, water driven mill, it was stone ground into flour and meal. The miller exacted a portion for his services, which he sometimes sacked and sold to others.

So far as is known, there was never a tavern at Oakbowery. The people, perhaps, had the same attitude as that of a famous Georgian, who, when his town was planning a hotel, voted against it, saying: "When gentlemen come to town, they can stay at my house. If any who are not gentlemen come, they can go elsewhere." It is said that a stagecoach stop was located at Cusseta, and it is known that there was one south of Oakbowery, the John Cotter place. This house still stands.

Roads were so poor that almost all traveling was done by horseback, so naturally Oakbowery people cherished their fine horses. They were noted for having a great many of the best, which occasionally they used for a great diversion among the planters—fox hunting.

It is easy to understand that horses were a necessity at this time, both for business and pleasure. There were no telephones or telegraph service, and with the poor roads, communication was uncertain. In the early days of the settlement, letters were a rare event. At first, they were sent and received through a chance traveler, and as most of the first settlers came from the same sections of Georgia, South Carolina and

Virginia, someone generally made a return visit to their community each year.

This condition prevailed only during the first few years of Oakbowery, as a postoffice was established there in 1837. The first mail route was Uhaupé, Pine Grove, Louchatchee, Fort Henderson, Gold Hill and Cusseta. Mail was carried by a "post rider" on horseback, collected at these points once a week and dispatched to Columbus, Georgia.

The first postmaster at Oakbowery was Ninian Kidd (believed to have been the son of Webb Kidd, the first settler). Other postmasters were: Jeremiah S. Walker, 1846; James J. Havis, 1858 and Helman Griffis, 1859. When the Civil War came, postal service was abandoned, and the postoffice was not reestablished at Oakbowery until June, 1882, when Warren S. Harris was appointed. Later ones were: William T. Andrews, 1886; Thomas M. Longshore, 1888; Samuel H. Andrews, 1894; John D. Harris, 1898 and James Edward Hunt, 1907. The postoffice at Oakbowery was discontinued in 1908, and the small frame building still stands at the crossroads.

About half a mile from the village is an old frame house (now falling down) which was the home of William Samford, who was for a time president of the Oakbowery Female Institute. He was the father of William J. Samford, governor of Alabama, 1900-1901. This home and lands were given to Joe Harris by his father, Absalom Harris, a Revolutionary War Veteran. Joe Harris lived a long and useful life in Oakbowery, and was an important man in the town and church for many years.

Another son of Absalom Harris owned the land on which the cemetery is located and donated by the Harris family. He was Brittain D. Harris and lived in a beautiful antebellum home in the oak grove nearby, which burned about 1900. A daughter of Absalom Harris married John Matthews, and they lived in the handsome old home known as the "Bullard Place," later the boyhood home of the famous general of World War I, General Robert Lee Bullard.

The home was built in 1850 by James Dowdell, another son of a Revolutionary War veteran. James and Lewis Dowdell first came to Georgia from Virginia, settling at Pine Mountain in Harris County, near Warm Springs, in 1828. The location is still known as "Dowdell's Knob."

Also near Oakbowery, but burned long ago, was the home of James

F. Dowdell, one of the first Trustees of the Oakbowery Female Institute. He served three terms as a United States Congressman, and had retired when the Civil War began. He went to Montgomery as a Representative from Chambers County to the State Convention, and voted for the Ordinance of Secession. Immediately afterwards, he organized the 37th Alabama Regiment Volunteer Infantry, and was distinguished at Corinth. With him, as Major, went William F. Slaton, principal of the "Men's College," the East Alabama Masonic Institute. After the war, Colonel Dowdell located at Auburn, Alabama, and was president of the East Alabama Male College there for a time.

The home of Judge William Callahan Thomas is still standing near Oakbowery and is in good repair. This home was also called a Dowdell place because it was inherited by the youngest daughter, Elizabeth, who married Crawford Dowdell. The plantation still consists of some thousand acres of the original land.

The James Dowdell house, a splendid example of white-columned antebellum architecture, was included in the National Historic American Buildings Survey of 1936. There is a small family cemetery nearby the home where he, his wife, and others are buried. The house itself burned some years ago.

In the later years of this house, it was owned by Captain Daniel Bullard, who had lived in Russell County, and had been an Indian fighter. Although he settled near "Lebanon," later Opelika, he moved his large family to Oakbowery to send his children to the schools there. A brother of General Robert Lee Bullard, Dr. Clarence Bullard, was one of the early physicians of Oakbowery, of whom Dr. Brockman was the first physician known to have settled there. Another was Dr. Hiram Bloodworth.

Another interesting home is that of Garret Morris, veteran of the War of 1812, and pioneer settler from Abbeville, South Carolina. With him came Thomas Allen, who built the home known as the "Page Place," just back of the parsonage and near the crossroads. Across the road from the "Page Place" is the "Preer Place," known by the family living there later, but built by James J. Havis, a surveyor and postmaster at Oakbowery.

Beyond these two old houses, about one quarter mile north, is an old home that was owned by a Major William Kirk, said to have been

a veteran of the Mexican War. Another Mexican War veteran, Joseph Day, lived near the present Oakbowery Methodist Church.

On the Gold Hill road, there stands the handsome antebellum home of the James M. Norwood family, with an interesting original log barn.

Other prominent families and personages in the history and development of Oakbowery were the Averys, Andrews, Spratlings, Orrin Brown, A. J. "Ab" Allen, James Dowdell, Louis Dowdell and their descendants; Daniel P. Hightower, Brittain Harris, Thomas D. Holt, E. S. McCurdy, Page family, Preer family, Robertson family; William J. Samford, Governor of Alabama, William H. Samford, Judge of Court of Appeals, T. D. Samford, U. S. District Attorney; the Thomas family; Mrs. W. C. Dowdell, who wrote Bishop Lovick Pierce the "daring suggestion" that women of the Methodist Church organize and promote a missionary movement; Judge James R. Dowdell, Alabama Supreme Court, and many others—carrying on the heritage of gracious, cultured Oakbowery throughout our great nation. Those who are left have been taught to remember, and the new people there are fast being immersed in the traditions.

Oakbowery contributed heavily to the Confederate cause, in men, wealth and supplies. The first battle casualty from Oakbowery was Sam Jones, an uncle of the famed evangelist. Garrett Morris had five sons in the army, two of whom were killed. William C. Thomas lost a son; Daniel Hightower lost a son; the Andrews family a son; John Morris, two sons, and so on down a long, sad list.

In the war years, death, destruction and desolation of the countryside overshadowed Oakbowery and the South. Overpowered, but not defeated then (and not defeated now), the scarecrow remnants of the armies of the South staggered home to remake their lives. To see how well they succeeded, one may now look up and down the Chattahoochee Valley's industry and marvel.

The coming of the railroad to Opelika caused many people to move there on account of better business prospects. Many young men, veterans of the Confederate Army, went West, and the exodus continued for some years to Texas and other Southwestern states. The Oakbowery Methodist Church roster of about 1870 shows a great many members "dismissed by letter," as they were "gone to Texas." To know that they succeeded there, one has only to read of the development of the great Southwest.



Oakbowery, from its earliest days, was a Methodist stronghold. A Missionary Baptist Church, however, was established there as the Sardis Church in 1836, and existed with a small congregation until about 1862. A Presbyterian Church was established in Oakbowery in the 1850's. The congregation was very small, and among the elders were Hugh Moore and Henry F. Daniel. The Reverend William Walker Morrison, minister, was licensed by the Lexington, Virginia, Presbytery in 1856, and ordained by the East Alabama Presbytery in 1857. Serving Oakbowery for a while, he was in the East Alabama Presbytery at various charges from 1856 to 1865. He served the LaFayette Presbyterian Church at LaFayette, Alabama, in 1863.

Removals, for economic or other reasons caused the lovely village of Oakbowery to decline, so that today it is a mere dot on the map. Gone are the many mansions; gone the two colleges; gone the sterling gentlemen and gentle ladies; gone the wealth and gracious living; gone to our great loss, is Oakbowery!

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*Note:* This paper was read at the meeting of the Society held at the West Point Recreation Center, West Point, Ga., September 22, 1960.

Mr. and Mrs. Clay Floyd live at the Oakbowery crossroads, their home near the northeast corner where the old passenger station of the LaFayette Railway once stood. Across the road, on the northwest corner, and diagonally opposite the old postoffice building, the Floyds own and operate the Oakbowery Cash Grocery, the only business at the crossroads now. Some timbers from the old railway station were used in construction of their store.





## SOME NOTES ON THE BAPTISTS OF OAKBOWERY

*by*

THE REVEREND BASIL B. MCGINTY

In that section of East Alabama largely composed of Chambers County, ten Missionary Baptist churches had been organized by September, 1836. One of the churches was named Sardis, and was located in the community known as Oakbowery.

Sardis Church remained a member of the Liberty Baptist Association, which was organized in September, 1836, until the session of 1848, when it requested and was granted a transfer to the Tuskegee Association.

We have access to the complete minutes of the Liberty Baptist Association, but the only persons named as being from the Oakbowery church during the twelve years 1836-1848 were as follows:

Davis Culberson  
William H. Goldsmith  
J. C. Sale  
Henry L. Wilkerson  
Charles Gregory  
Levi Parks  
James Wooten  
Walter E. Smith

Some idea of the rapid turnover or change in population of the Oakbowery area is gained by noting the membership of the Sardis Church from year to year. In 1838, the church membership total is not given, but in 1839, three years after organization, the membership was 116 when recorded in September of that year.

During the Sardis Church year 1839-1840, records show five additions to the membership, but there were 17 dismissals by letter.

The ups and downs of succeeding years are shown graphically as follows:

1840-1—2 additions; 6 dismissals

1841-2—61 additions (55 by baptism); 35 dismissals by letter

1842-3—23 additions; 4 dismissals

1843-4—2 dismissals

1844-5—42 additions (25 by baptism); 17 dismissals by letter

1847 —46 additions (33 by baptism); 12 dismissals; net membership now totalled 175.

1848 —18 additions; 21 dismissals by letter

The Third Session of the Liberty Baptist Association was held with Sardis Church at Oakbowery in 1838. In the 1840's a church building was erected in the reminiscent classical Southern style of the day. The front was Greek revival, with entablature and architrave above four large fluted Doric columns, supported on stone bases. There were two sets of double front doors, surmounted by fanlights, and two sets of steps from the porch between the columns of each side.

In 1862, the Sardis membership having declined, the church was sold to the Antioch Baptist Church. The handsome building, of which we have a photograph of about 1885, with the Antioch membership, dressed in their "Sunday best," gathered on the porch and steps, was taken down piece by piece and rebuilt on the site of the present building in Chambers County, Alabama. The old Sardis building remained in use by the Antioch membership until 1895.

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*Ed. Note:* The Rev. McGinty, of River View, Alabama, spoke briefly at the meeting of the Society on September 22, 1960, concerning the Baptists of Oakbowery, and these are his expanded notes.



## OAKBOWERY CENSUS OF 1860

### *A Study*

By WILLIAM H. DAVIDSON

Preparations for the United States Census of 1860 of Chambers County, Alabama, included the division of the county into Northern and Southern Divisions. Jasper Harris was Assistant Marshall in charge of the Northern Division and began enumerating at LaFayette, the county seat, on June 25, 1860.

James M. Kennedy was Assistant Marshall in charge of the Southern Division and started his count at Oakbowery on June 28, 1860. He filled in only one page of 40 names that day and began at Cusseta the day after. He returned to Oakbowery on July 27, worked three days, then intermittently in August. He completed the Southern Division census with the last page of Oakbowery names on September 12. Mr. Harris finished at Fredonia in the Northern Division on September 28. A great deal of their travel was probably on horseback.

The first family listed at Oakbowery was that of David A. Coker, 57, and wife Elizabeth, 35, and daughter Mary A., 11. Mr. Coker was an overseer. He owned no real estate, and his personal estate was listed as \$150. The Cokers came to Oakbowery from Georgia.

Overseers were very necessary on the rich, slave labor plantations of Oakbowery. They supervised plantation affairs. Orders from the plantation owner were passed from overseer to a driver, or Negro slave, especially chosen, or bought, for his ability to boss the slaves in their tasks and accomplish the work satisfactorily.

Plantation owners, planters and farmers of Oakbowery were all listed as "Farmers" by the census taker. Of the total population of 931, including two free colored males and three free colored females, there were 124 farmers and 35 overseers. Only *free* Negroes were counted.

Two merchants are listed, one being David Rosenberg, who owned \$500. of real estate, with personal estate of \$4,500. The other was John S. Combs, with personal estate of \$5,000. He was the son of William Combs, and wife Sarah, who were listed with \$7,000 in real estate and \$33,000. personal estate owned.

David Rosenberg doubtless catered to the trade of the ladies of Oakbowery, with Combs probably offering general merchandise or plantation supplies.

Although the Oakbowery Female Institute and the East Alabama Masonic Institute for boys had ceased operations by this time, schools were operated for the children of Oakbowery, and a total of 175 children attended school during the year. Beginning with the age of six years they are shown as having attended school.

Of the four school teachers, William Boyd, 24, of the John Boyd family of Oakbowery, was a comparatively rich young man with personal estate of \$5,000. He was born in Georgia, from whence his family had come. Two other teachers were from Georgia, John H. Swearingen, 28, and Cullen J. Caldwell, 24, with estates of \$800. and \$250. respectively. One female teacher, Miss Mary Bell, 24, from South Carolina, listed no estate, real or personal.

Only 13 persons in the Oakbowery census are listed as being over 20 years of age who could not read or write.

Charles Dolkert was the one Professor of Music at Oakbowery, with estate of \$200. He and his wife Catherine were from the province of Bavaria, Germany. Since they were listed with members of the Edward S. McCurdy family, they resided with this family, prominent at Oakbowery. Professor Dolkert may have been engaged to teach the McCurdy children, of whom there were six. The Dolkerts were both 28 years old, and the professor may have taught privately in the neighborhood, as was the custom, or at the school, or both.

Among the trades in the town were two bootmakers, John McCormack, 47, born in Ireland, and Augustus Kaufman, 26, born in Saxony, Germany. James W. Lasseter, 49, from Georgia, was a shoemaker.

There were two blacksmiths, Alfred G. Lamar, 35, and David Jones, 55. Lamar was from England, and Jones was from Georgia. James H. Goggins, 46, from South Carolina, was listed as miller, along with a harness maker, four laborers, and a rarity, one farm laborer, as slaves did the labor almost exclusively. Oakbowery did not have a railroad, but it had one inhabitant listed as a rail road hand.

Four carpenters listed had rather significantly larger estates than

many small farmers, all owning some real estate. This may indicate they had been residents in the community for some time. Edward Griffiths, 35, from Georgia was the most prosperous one. Since carpentry was a trade much in demand, they may have worked together as specialists.

John E. Williamson, 21, son of the Reverend Thomas J. Williamson of Oakbowery, and Charles Washburn, 18, son of C. C. Washburn, painter, were clerks listed in the census. The Washburns were listed with personnel of the coach, carriage and wagon manufactory at Oakbowery, so it may be presumed that the young men kept the accounts.

Others of the manufactory are shown as:

6 Coach Body Makers	2 Coach Painters
1 Coach Trimmer	1 Coach Blacksmith
1 Carriage Trimmer	1 Wagon Maker

Seeing to the dental health of Oakbowery was William G. Slaughter from Georgia. He was 33 years of age, was listed as a dental surgeon, and had \$4,400. real estate.

There were two physicians listed, John B. Barnett, 27, from Georgia, owning \$750. real estate and \$4,500. personal estate, and Hillary L. Bruce, 28, from Georgia, with \$600. personal estate.

Oakbowery in 1860 had been a Methodist stronghold since the first Chattahoochee Mission of the Alabama Conference began a Society at Webb Kidd's store there in 1835 consisting of 8 members. Six Methodist Episcopal Ministers lived there in 1860:

	<i>Real &amp; Personal Estate Owned</i>
Ethelbert B. Norton	\$ 1,500.
Thomas J. Williamson	9,000.
Robert C. Tucker	14,600.
Samuel W. Harris	104,000.
Robert H. Harris	10,000.
Samuel Harwell	18,000.

Ethelbert B. Norton, 24, from North Carolina, and wife, Louisa, 22, from Georgia, had only arrived in December, 1859, to be the first regular minister at Oakbowery Methodist Church. Circuit preachers had served the charge up until this time.



The Reverends Williamson, Tucker, Samuel W. Harris and Harwell had children in school. Reverend Robert H. Harris was the son of Samuel W. Harris. He and wife, Emma, both born in Alabama, had been married within the year. She was 18, and he 24 years of age.

The census lists 23 heads of families at Oakbowery in 1860 having real estate and personal estate combined from \$40,000. to \$150,000. These were:

Edward S. McCurdy	\$150,000
Samuel W. Harris	104,000
Lucretia Robertson	95,860
Rachael M. Avery	93,600
John Boyd	88,000
William C. Ross	88,000
William C. Dowdell	80,000
John Matthews	77,000
Richard B. Lockhart	75,000
Thomas Taylor	69,680
Thomas Sharman	65,000
Silas S. Dowdell	62,000
Brittain D. Harris	60,000
William J. Maddox	49,000
Henry Williams	48,000
Harriet F. Jackson	47,000
Cyrus Billingslea	46,000
Absalom Gullatt	43,000
John T. Harris	42,500
James M. Norwood	42,000
James H. Forman	40,500
Nelson Clayton	40,000
William Combs	40,000

Oakbowery was second only to LaFayette in total real estate and personal estate evaluations, and compares with LaFayette and other towns as follows:

<i>Towns</i>	<i>Real Estate</i>	<i>Personal Estates</i>	<i>Totals</i>
LaFayette	\$ 649,635.	\$2,525,761.	\$3,175,396.
Oakbowery	490,452.	2,304,019.	2,794,471.
Fredonia	280,140.	1,141,825.	1,421,965.
Rough and Ready	229,745.	851,340.	1,081,085.
Cusseta	286,274.	367,827.	654,101.
Dudleyville	161,528.	491,974.	653,502.
Beulah	138,990.	411,600.	550,590.
Osanippa	66,975.	231,250.	298,225.

Considering LaFayette for a moment, William B. S. Gilmer was the wealthiest man in the county seat, and perhaps in the county, with \$125,000. of real estate owned and personal estate of \$508,500., a total of \$633,500. On this basis, the wealth at Oakbowery seems more evenly distributed.

King Cotton reigned in Alabama in 1860. At Oakbowery, the wealth, as elsewhere, was founded largely upon cheap, fertile lands, cleared and worked to the utmost by slaves. Real estate in the amount of \$10,000. and over was owned by 13 heads of prominent families:

Richard B. Lockhart	\$45,000.
Edward S. McCurdy	30,000.
Samuel W. Harris	24,000.
William C. Ross	20,000.
Rachael M. Avery	18,600.
William C. Dowdell	15,000.
Thomas Taylor	14,680.
Lucretia Robertson	14,400.
Brittain D. Harris	13,000.
Silas S. Dowdell	12,000.
James M. Norwood	12,000.
John Matthews	12,000.
Absalom Gullatt	10,000.

Under \$10,000., the real estate owned evaluations of 42 farmers down to minimum of \$1,200., were as follows:

12 — \$7,000 to \$8,000
10 — 5,000 to 6,000
13 — 3,000 to 4,000
6 — 1,500 to 2,000
1 — 1,200
<hr/> 42

Revealing the large ownership of slaves, there were 56 farmers at Oakbowery having personal estates owned in excess of \$10,000.:

1 — \$120,000
2 — 88,000
1 — 80,000
1 — 75,000
4 — 65,000
2 — 50,000 to \$55,000
5 — 40,000 to 45,000
10 — 30,000 to 35,000
19 — 20,000 to 25,000
11 — 10,000 to 15,000
<hr/> 56

The total population of Oakbowery was 931 in 1860, consisting of 466 white males, 460 white females, 2 free colored males and 3 free colored females. Two children were listed as idiots. Of marriages, there were six within the year.

Where did the people of Oakbowery originate? Of 424 shown as born in Alabama, a majority were born of parents emigrating into Chambers County beginning after its founding in 1832. A tabulation of births by states or country of origin follows:

Alabama	424
Georgia	360
South Carolina	74
North Carolina	29
Virginia	17
Florida	4
Tennessee	3
Kentucky	1
Maryland	1
Mississippi	1
Texas	1
Connecticut	1
Massachusetts	1
New Jersey	2
New York	1
England	1
Germany	7
Ireland	3
	<hr/>
	931

A century has passed since James M. Kennedy took the census of Oakbowery. Along with the pioneers, many of those listed in 1860 lie in the two cemeteries.

Descendants of these valiant people, coming as they do from Southern pioneers, and having heard the glory of Oakbowery, still hold in reverence this lovely spot once so important in Chambers County.

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*Note:* This paper, and the two following, were written by Mr. Davidson in conjunction with Mrs. Love's *Old Oakbowery*.

## OAKBOWERY SOILS AND SLAVES

By WILLIAM H. DAVIDSON

Ten or twelve miles below Oakbowery, Alabama, and south of the Chambers County line, the Coastal Plain region begins. The entire county lies in the southern extension of the Piedmont Plateau.

About one mile northwest of Oakbowery there is a sudden sharp divide, running northwesterly to a point two miles north of Welch on the Central of Georgia Railroad. Because of this divide, the Chattahoochee and Tallapoosa rivers each drain about half the county.

In the immediate Oakbowery area, the Snapper Creek, Osanippa Creek and Halawakee Creek systems drain into the Chattahoochee, with Sandy Creek heading toward the Tallapoosa.

The gently sloping hillsides of the valleys, the well drained uniformity of elevation, averaging about 750 feet above sea level, lack of swamps and the mild, equable climate, promised much to the early settlers. The virgin forests of oak, pine, hickory, gum, some walnut, persimmon and other growth, proved the fertility of the land. Here was found a growing season averaging 233 days, sufficient for all crops, and allowing two or more ordinary crops in a season on the same land.

Wealthy slaveholders and settlers emigrating to Chambers County from Georgia and other Southern States after the United States treaty with the Creek Indians, and establishment of the county, in 1832, purchased tracts of from 1,000 to 10,000 acres and began to clear the land. Due to the Indian question, however, finally settled in 1837, the original forests had been little cleared for cropping before 1840. Until that time, much of the farming was done in a self-sustaining manner.

Good pasturage was found in the free range of the forests and stream bottom lands, and this feature, coupled with the climate, promoted livestock raising to a considerable extent among the early settlers.

At Oakbowery, as elsewhere, cotton became the chief crop between 1840 and 1850. With the Indians out of the way, the slaveholders of the Oakbowery-Cusseta area began cotton raising on newly cleared grounds on a vast scale.

The white population of the county in 1840 was 10,188 with 7,145

blacks. Cotton production climbed steadily until 1860, when the county produced 24,589 bales of the total state production of 989,955 bales.

Predominant in the Oakbowery area, and the southern half of the county, are alluvial soils resulting from ages of denudation and degradation of the underlying rocks of the Piedmont Plateau, these products being reworked and deposited by the streams. Oakbowery is in a rich, cotton growing loam section known to geologists as Cecil Clay Loam.

The loam consists of a reddish-brown, mellow, heavy loam to clay loam, about 6 to 8 inches deep, with a subsoil 6 to 36 inches deep of red clay. The surface soil has a dark-brown color many times due to its organic material content, and it is practically free of stones.

From the early days down to the present this soil was locally called "mulatto" or "chocolate" land, and large bodies are found in the Oakbowery, Cusseta and Gold Hill areas. It would produce one half to one bale or more of cotton per acre and 10 to 20 bushels or better of corn per acre in the days before fertilizer was known. During the Civil War years, large crops of corn, oats, wheat and barley were raised for the Confederacy.

A study of the 1855 Alabama census of Chambers County reveals 1,080 slaves in the hands of 40 prominent plantation owners and planters in the Oakbowery precinct, an average of 27 slaves. The largest slave owner was James Dowdell, with 109 slaves.

Other prominent families owning slaves and plantations were:

	<i>No. of Slaves</i>
Daniel Robertson	70
Elias H. Avery	69
E. S. McCurdy	67
William M. Samford	64
Samuel W. Harris	63
Teresa Maddox	56
Samuel Jeter	55
Silas S. Dowdell	49
James F. Dowdell	48
John Boyd	42
John Matthews	40
Brittain D. Harris	31
Mary Dawson	31



James H. Forman	28
William McWhorter	25
Nelson Clayton	25
James M. Norwood	23
James Carlisle	20

From 20 slaves, the list dwindles down to four people owning one each, including David Rosenberg, a merchant at Oakbowery. The three members of the Dowdell family owned 206 slaves. This study shows that the plantation owners of Oakbowery were well to do without being enormously rich as were others of Alabama's Black Belt. In the 1850's, when the old process of clearing new lands and planting had about run its course, attention focussed on methods of making the land produce more, and fertilizers of many kinds were being tried.

The problem was well discussed in the various agricultural magazines and periodicals of the era. A popular one was *The American Cotton Planter*, published in Montgomery, and edited by Dr. N. B. Cloud, of La Place, Alabama. This publication had a resident agent at Oakbowery, one Mr. Isaac Parks. The *Planter* was "A Monthly Journal, Devoted to Improved Plantation Economy, Manufactures, and the Mechanical Arts." In the issues for 1853 are found several letters and articles by Oakbowery plantation owners and planters.

One who signed himself "H." wrote on May 28, 1853 an astute article about plowing and the use of the "world renowned effort of human genius," the Eagle Plow, drawn with two horses or mules. The subject of a lighter and more effective plow had occupied his leisure time "for the past six years," which he had finally obtained along the lines of his own design and thinking. "I am now able to make more perfect ridges," he wrote about his one horse plow, "and more of them, than I formerly did with two."

"H." strongly felt that young men, instead of rushing into the "already over-done professions," should study the mechanics of the plow and other farm implements, as "a wide and open field of human improvement."

It is surmised that the author, "H.", was Daniel Pierce Hightower, an enterprising and well-liked planter, successful, though not a large slaveholder. He kept an excellent farm shop, which included some furniture and cabinet making by slaves. A mahogany shaving stand from the McCurdy house, and two English cherry secretary-bookcases have survived from this shop.

"H." concluded his article with a table showing how much one team and plow would perform in a day in acres and tenths, dependent on the width of furrows in inches and the width of rows in feet. The team was presumed to move at the rate of about 3 feet per second, or 2 miles per hour for 10 hours per day. The author cautioned that horses or mules in good condition could do this, "and if you would keep them in good condition it is enough for them to do."

In another issue, "H." wrote an article on *Wagon Wheels*, with another mathematical table, "elucidating the laws governing the passage of loaded articles over obstructions." He also worked out a mathematical table to show the number of stands, or plants, on an acre of land, for any distance apart from 10 inches to six feet inclusive.

Nelson Clayton is also found in the *Planter* as author of a "Premium Essay on Hill-side Ditching," which was read before the Second Annual Fair of the Georgia and Alabama Agricultural Society, "the result of his several years' experience and close observation." He seems to have been a pioneer in the days when little or no attention was given to proper ditching and drainage of fields to prevent loss of soil, and long before terracing and contour plowing as we know it.

Mr. Clayton also wrote, at the invitation of the editor, an article on his plan for saving sweet potatoes. This was about a specially designed house of Mr. Clayton's invention which he had built on his place. It was stated that he had used it for twenty years without a failure. The author believed it "the duty of every farmer to give for the benefit of others any improvement he may make, after he has properly tested same."

These activities indicate considerable community interest in common plantation problems of the day. It is also evident that some slaveholders of Oakbowery were members of "The Agricultural Association of the Planting States," an organization formed to present and defend the institution of slavery in the Southern States.

In a published circular of the Executive Committee of the Association, in deference to mounting abolitionist sentiment, they noted: "It has been said that 'the world is against us.' Be it so. The world, we know, is dependent on us, and we glory in our position. Let us be true to ourselves, and all will be well."

The course of history, however, was not determined by this group.

and the bloody American war of the states following in a few years wiped out forever the evil and good of slavery and a distinct way of life.

Postwar conditions immediately led to a decline in farming operations at Oakbowery. Later, farming did not survive under the tenant or share-cropper system sufficiently to sustain the village as families died out or moved away. About all that is left of Oakbowery is the crossroads, and it is truly a place of memory now.



## THE RAIL ROADS ABOUT OAKBOWERY

By WILLIAM H. DAVIDSON

During the days of Oakbowery's antebellum prosperity, 1840 to 1860, no railroad reached it. When the Montgomery Rail Road Company, chartered in 1834, began its survey from Montgomery, Alabama, on the Alabama River, to a place called West Point, Georgia, on the Chattahoochee River, the thought was to connect the shipping of two important rivers and supplement river traffic. Competition between river and railroad traffic was a later development. West Point was about 18 miles from Oakbowery.

Two routes were surveyed to West Point by Chief Engineer Andrew Alfred Dexter of the Montgomery Rail Road Company. These routes were known as the "Valley Route" and the "Prairie Route."<sup>1</sup>

The "Valley Route" followed the flat of the Tallapoosa River and Usaupee Creek for about 45 miles to a point about three miles from the then new Federal Road at Tuskegee. It then followed the middle branch of the creek by the Indian village of Notasulga, thence by Brittain Harris' place. Mr. Harris owned lands in the vicinity of Kidd's Store, which later became Oakbowery, and from his place the survey continued to a point near Cusseta, then to West Point. The total survey distance was 87¼ miles.

The pine region upon the line of the road from near Notasulga to the Lebanon Church area, which later became Opelika, was described in 1835 as "a country so poor that the Indians would not live upon it." By 1853, however, there were "four prosperous villages in the space of 20 miles, the lands readily commanding from \$8 to \$12 per acre, or about 100 per cent more than that of a similar quality 15 or 20 miles from the road."<sup>2</sup>

Oakbowery is located in Chambers County, Alabama, about 12 miles from the beginning of the Coastal Plain. Northwest about one mile from Oakbowery there is a sudden, sharp divide running northwesterly through the county to a point about two miles north of Welch. This causes the drainage of the county to flow east to the Chattahoochee River and west to the Tallapoosa River.

The "Valley Route" offered considerable economy in clearing and

grading. The line declined westward towards Montgomery from a point within 20 miles of West Point with a fall of 400 feet from the summit. The heavy traffic of cotton contemplated would thus be moving downhill, and the grade was such on the eastward haul to West Point that there would be no necessity for stationary power to assist locomotive operations.

Chief Engineer Dexter surveyed the "Prairie Route" and found it broken in the southern part, and "tolerably fair" in the vicinity of the Federal Road at Tuskegee, but "vastly inferior" to the surface of the Tallapoosa flat. The route would be 17 miles longer than the "Valley Route" and he estimated the cost at \$6,000. per mile for the first 40 miles. The first 40 miles of the "Valley Route," including the Fort Decatur bluff interruptions, was estimated at only \$2,600. per mile.

The railroad to West Point from Montgomery was built via the "Valley Route" and completed to West Point in 1851 by the Montgomery and West Point Rail Road Company, successor in 1843 to the original company. This line also constructed a branch from Opelika to Columbus, Georgia, between 1852 and 1856.

In 1870, the Western Railway of Alabama, operating from Selma to Montgomery, consolidated with the Montgomery and West Point Rail Road Company. The line from West Point to Selma is now known as The Western Railway of Alabama and is part of the Atlanta and West Point Rail Road Company—Georgia Railroad system known as "The West Point Route."

The branch from Opelika to Columbus was conveyed to the Columbus and Western in 1883 and became part of the Central of Georgia in 1895.

Encouraged by the Alabama legislative acts of 1868, under which first mortgage bonds were indorsed by the governor on the part of the state, the East Alabama & Cincinnati Rail Road was incorporated. It proposed to build a road from Opelika to Oxford, Alabama, to connect with the Selma, Rome and Dalton Road.<sup>8</sup> In a circular about the project, this construction would "place Opelika, Montgomery, Columbus, and all the rich cotton growing region of Southwestern Georgia and East and Southeast Alabama, at least 50 miles nearer to Chattanooga, Nashville, Louisville, St. Louis, Cincinnati and Chicago, and the granaries and meat-houses of the great West, than they are at present by the route by Atlanta. And this advantage in distance and time will give to the Oxford



and Opelika route a business in freight and travel second to that of no other road in the State."

Again there was hope at Oakbowery, for, as the circular stated, the line would "not only give the people along the line easy access to market, but it will develop the natural resources of the country, increase the population, add to the productions of the soil, and enhance the general prosperity."

The railroad, however, followed a more uniform survey on the eastern side of the Tallapoosa—Chattahoochee divide, from Opelika to Roanoke, in Randolph County, a distance of 36.75 miles. The gauge was 4 feet 8½ inches. By 1871, the East Alabama & Cincinnati had built only 19.27 miles of track, to Buffalo. The nearest the line came to Oakbowery was Tuckersburg, a little more than 2 miles away.

In 1880, the line was sold under foreclosure and the successor company, the East Alabama Railway Company, completed the line from Buffalo to Roanoke in 1888. The East Alabama Railway Company became part of the Central of Georgia system in 1895.

County and town aid to the railroads was authorized by the Alabama legislative acts of 1868, and among towns suffering losses from some of these Reconstruction bond issues was Opelika, which became so in debt it lost its charter for a while.

Chambers County citizens were burdened with bonds in the East Alabama & Cincinnati venture in the amount of \$150,000.<sup>4</sup>

After the East Alabama became part of the Central of Georgia, the "cotton men," merchants and business leaders of LaFayette began to chafe at what they considered higher freight rates charged to LaFayette than charged for goods delivered to other points on the line the same distance from Opelika.

In the *LaFayette Sun* for July 10, 1895, under a column headed *Better Rates*, there was editorial comment, in part, as follows:

For some time our merchants have been aroused to the great need of a lower freight rate to this point. Some weeks since a committee was sent to Savannah to confer with the Traffic Manager of the Central System. Letters have passed and urgent requests for a better rate have been made, but they refuse to accede to any proposition upon the part of the busi-

ness men of LaFayette. Now unless something is done this town is doomed.

"The LaFayette Board of Trade," the article continued, "now proposes to take other steps to secure reasonable rates. A movement is on foot, which, if it materializes, will be productive of good to this entire section. We are not at liberty yet to make it known, but it is a feasible plan. The merchants are determined, and where there is a will there is a way."

This rather transparent secret, of course, was the idea of an independent railroad, to be built by capital of LaFayette and Chambers County citizens, and owned and operated by them. Though there were doubts by some, a corporation was formed, chartered as the LaFayette Railway Company. Its elected officers were prominent citizens of LaFayette, G. E. McGhee, President; J. C. Griffin, Treasurer, and George E. Burnett, Secretary. It was capitalized at \$100,000.00. Offices were in the Bank of LaFayette building.

Among the chief stockholders were "cotton men" and merchants such as Schuessler Brothers Mercantile Company, R. W. Allen Company, McGehee-Driver Company, Tucker-Willingham Company, and other individuals.

Although a route to West Point, Georgia, was surveyed and considered, the favored and chosen route was reported in the *Sun* for July 17, 1895, as follows:

The route to Opelika will be, starting at the cotton warehouse, crossing railroad at Mr. Luke Beard's, on East of J. T. Jones' plantation, southerly direction, striking the ridge East of Mr. Davidson's, on down public road via Alf Harrell's, via Oakbowery, entering Opelika to the left of the water tower. This route can be easily graded, and only one creek to bridge.

The surveying party for the line consisted of J. L. Cowan & Son, Surveyors, with E. R. Finney, first assistant, R. S. Moore, Lee Griffin, and "four colored boys."

The theme at this time was "We want a dummy line," and there was a spirit of hopefulness and encouragement prevalent that the building of the railroad was just the beginning of industrial improvement and development, all for the advancement of Chambers County. The *Sun*, knowing people, urged that "there be no fights, nothing save 'a strong

pull and a pull altogether'—punning that "there is no need of being dumb about the dummy."

Enthusiasm for the line ran as high as the mercury that hot summer, it was said, and public meetings were held along the proposed route. From Moorefield, Mr. Walter Moss wrote the Editors of the *Sun* on July 22, 1895, as follows:

Dear Sirs:—I am requested this p.m. by Mr. Mack Longshore to write you that the meeting in the interest of the Dummy Line meets at Oakbowery on Friday morning next, 26th, at 10 o'clock. Everybody invited and requested to come, especially those on the proposed Dummy Line. Come and help the Dummy. We want it and now is the time to get it. Oakbowery is an old town and knows how to take care of crowds, and the Dummy is going to put new life in her, and some say, they are going to have a large lake at that place, and that it is going to be the summer resort of the Opelika people and I suppose other cities further South. Yours truly.

On July 26, after a watermelon cutting for the railroad proponents of LaFayette, and citizens of Oakbowery and other communities on the line, the crowd assembled at the schoolhouse. Honorable J. H. Harris was elected chairman after the meeting was called to order, and J. E. Timmons was elected secretary.

Judge Dowdell, called on to make a speech, set forth the plans for the railroad, and his object was to "find out if the Oakbowery people were willing to render any aid or offer any inducements to get the dummy to pass through or by Oakbowery." A further report of the meeting, in the *Sun* for July 31, follows:

Some of the gentlemen wished to know if they were expected or would be allowed to take stock, or would the help which they might give be simply in the nature of a donation. Several speeches were made and the advantages of the proposed route were shown. It was stated that if the people along the proposed route would give twenty per cent of the amount of the cost of the road that the projectors would build it.

After much discussion, Mr. Page made a motion that a committee of three be appointed to see the property owners along the line and solicit subscriptions to the enterprise, and find out if there would be any trouble to get the right of way. The chair appointed Messrs. S. H. Andrews, W. A. Page and Mack Longshore.

Before the meeting adjourned, there was subscribed about \$900.00, which was encouraging to the projectors of the enterprise. After some further discussion the meeting adjourned. The visitors from LaFayette were taken in charge by the hospitable people of Oakbowery and treated to an elegant dinner.

The occasion was a most enjoyable one, and we feel safe in saying that the Oakbowery people are anxious for the dummy and will help to make it a success.

On August 28, it was reported that the contract for grading the entire road bed of the line from LaFayette to Opelika had been let to Harwell, Marshall & Company. The construction committee of the LaFayette Railway Company, consisting of M. W. Allen, Charles Schuessler, J. M. Tucker, J. E. Andrews, W. B. Wood and President G. E. McGehee, advertised for bids on 50,000 cross ties to be delivered at LaFayette and along the line of the railroad to Opelika. The laying of rails began at Opelika in the fall, and on February 26, 1896, the following report of progress appeared in the *Sun*:

The LaFayette Railway is progressing nicely. The tracks are nearly all laid to Oakbowery and within a few days a regular schedule will be put on out from Opelika. Work of grading from Oakbowery to LaFayette is progressing and track laying will be pushed to early completion.

The President of the road, Mr. G. E. McGehee, has just returned from Chattanooga and other points, where he went to look at some passenger coaches. He is encouraged at the outlook of the road and asks us to say that it is no dummy, but a standard gauge railroad. We expect great things of the LaFayette Railway.

*"It is no dummy, but a standard gauge railroad."* Due to the fact that at first the merchants proposed to build a single gauge railroad, or "dummy line," then proceeded to lay a standard gauge line, the train early got its nickname of "The Dummy," a name which stuck to it throughout its existence.

By May, 1896, trains were running regularly on the LaFayette Railway from Opelika to Oakbowery. Marveling at the speed at which the line was being built towards LaFayette, and eager to try it out, people of the town would ride horses and in buggies down to Oakbowery on Sundays to catch the train for a round trip to Opelika. The new coaches for passengers, just received, were reported as "beauties." As winter came on, they were further improved with heaters.



At this time there were three round trips from Opelika to Oakbowery on a daily schedule, according to a timetable of the LaFayette Railway Company, beginning at 6:00 o'clock a.m. The trip to Oakbowery took 30 minutes, and there was a return trip at 7:30 a.m. This continued through the day until the last departure from Oakbowery at 5:30 p.m. On Sundays, four round trips were made. The daily fare was two cents per mile, with one fare for round trip to Oakbowery and Spratling's Grove on Sunday. Passenger coaches were always left near the picnic grounds in case of rain.

G. E. Weber, of Opelika, was appointed ticket agent at the Opelika end of the line. Albert B. Smith, of Opelika, became freight agent at LaFayette. A Mr. Baxley was the first conductor, Frank Schuessler, of LaFayette, served as conductor for a while, and Elliott Schuessler, of LaFayette, was conductor, with possibly others serving. Harry B. Norman served as ticket and freight agent at LaFayette, succeeding Mr. Smith about 1901. Sterling Ramage was "newsboy" on the railway in 1896.

The Fourth of July, always an occasion for celebration, was celebrated in "grand rally" style in 1896. It was held at the Fair Grounds at Opelika, and the LaFayette Railway proudly ran a special excursion for LaFayette citizens from T. H. Grimmett's place near LaFayette, the railroad lacking then only a short distance to completion to the town. Bicycle and horseracing, and many other attractions were advertised, as well as reduced rates by the railroads. Admission to the fair grounds was 25c. It was also advertised as a "great attraction" to get to ride on the new railroad.

A passenger station was built at Oakbowery, on the northeast corner of the cross roads. Farther away, near the eastern edge of the Park, a freight station was constructed. This old building still stands in 1961, once converted into a dwelling, but empty now. The passenger station no longer exists. That a railroad had at long last reached Oakbowery was a fact for rejoicing, and for a while there were hopes that the town would develop again, with farming revived and attractions of a resort center. The decline of the town continued, however, and a number of buildings and stores were torn down, or taken down and removed elsewhere. Some stores were removed for rebuilding at Waverly, Alabama.

J. H. Harris, of Oakbowery, wrote the editors of the *LaFayette Sun* on August 25, 1896, commending the "pluck, vim and energy of the projectors," as the road had been "agitated, graded and equipped almost within a period of twelve months."



Among other things, Mr. Harris wrote:

Railroad men say it is a good road, passengers wonder at the smoothness and rapidity with which the train glides along. Strangers are amazed as they look and view the fine farming land through which the road passes and say, "We had no idea the road traversed such fine farming land."

It had been one of the hopes of Oakbowery that those passing through would be properly impressed with the fine land and settle in the area. Mr. Harris also pointed out that within one quarter of a mile of the railway at Oakbowery there was the famous soapstone quarry of Colonel William P. Spratling. Dr. N. T. Lupton had told him, he said, that the quarry would be "indeed valuable if near a railroad, that he had analyzed it and pronounced it absolutely fireproof and susceptible of a very superior polish." The outcropping covered a space of about 80 acres, and he had found two kinds, or colors, of the stone, white and blue.

In conclusion, Mr. Harris stated:

If Col. Spratling would develop the quarry and cause some more cash to circulate, he would be a benefactor, beside filling his "coffers."

If our county ever gets over the Cleveland "boom" no part of Chambers County will show more signs of prosperity than that adjacent to the LaFayette Railroad.

The passenger rate in effect October 1, 1896 was as follows:

LaFayette to Opelika	50c	Opelika to LaFayette	50c
LaFayette to Ocoola	40c	Opelika to Ocoola	10c
LaFayette to Barnes	35c	Opelika to Barnes	15c
LaFayette to Oakbowery	30c	Opelika to Oakbowery	20c
LaFayette to Thomas	25c	Opelika to Thomas	25c
LaFayette to Spratlings	25c	Opelika to Spratlings	25c
LaFayette to Sturkeys	20c	Opelika to Sturkeys	30c
LaFayette to Andrews	20c	Opelika to Andrews	30c
LaFayette to Robertsons	15c	Opelika to Robertsons	35c
LaFayette to Moorefield	15c	Opelika to Moorefield	35c
LaFayette to Bledsoes	10c	Opelika to Bledsoes	40c
LaFayette to Grimmetts	10c	Opelika to Grimmetts	40c

No fare less than 10c will be charged for any distance.

G. E. McGehee, President

The beautiful Park at Oakbowery, in which still may be seen many magnificent oaks, hickories, and other trees, became a favorite spot for railway excursions from both ends of the line. Sunday school picnics, dances, frolics and various gatherings were held there and in the covered pavilion built in the Park, but it, too, is no longer in existence. Excursions were always run when the Ringling Brothers Circus came to Opelika fair grounds. Occasionally, special excursions were run for the Negroes.

In 1905, after almost ten years of successful operation, the LaFayette Railway was sold to the Central of Georgia Railway. Negotiations for the deal were handled by Mr. McGehee and Mr. Griffin. The road bed was changed by the new owners some time later and Oakbowery was bypassed, so it has no railroad today.

One of the two engines of the LaFayette Railway Company saw service on the line of the Chattahoochee Valley Railway Company, West Point, Georgia, as Engine No. 3. A. L. Swint, Treasurer of the C. V., recalls that the fireman on the LaFayette line, James W. Ledbetter, worked for a while on the Central of Georgia, but later fired the engine on the C. V. from 1923 to 1937. Mr. Swint also states that the late Johnny Ray was "the most liked" engineer on the old East Alabama and the Central of Georgia. Mr. Ledbetter was fireman for Mr. Ray. The other engine was sold and sent to Hayneville, Alabama.

In 1956, the late Elliott Schuessler, a conductor on the LaFayette Railway, recalled that the only living employees he knew at that time were Charlie Beaty, then janitor of the LaFayette Schools, who had been a fireman, and himself.<sup>5</sup>

This independent railroad, serving an era so well, and beloved as "The Dummy," was most accommodating. In season, the conductor would stop it along the route to allow the passengers to pick blackberries. The *Opelika News* reported in August, 1895, during the "agitation" for the railroad, that "One lady said last night she dreamed she was about to take the dummy for Opelika, and in her hurry forgot her teeth, and hollered to the conductor to please wait a little while until she could run back in the house for them. He waited."

Mrs. Quintus Pickett Siler, who is the daughter of James C. Griffin, the LaFayette Railway's treasurer, and still lives in LaFayette, widely known and beloved as "Miss Mamie," has a particular reason for appreciating the accommodation of this line. When, as Mary Anderson

Griffin, she was making plans for her evening wedding to be held at the First Methodist Church in LaFayette, in June, 1904, she was faced with the problem of transportation for out of town guests after the wedding and her own honeymoon. Ordinarily, the train left LaFayette on its last run to Opelika at 2:00 o'clock in the afternoon. To accommodate the bridal party, however, the train was held over and departed for Opelika at 10:00 o'clock that night!

Cotton, flour, farm equipment, Kentucky and Western horses, and merchandise needed by a prosperous cotton growing and distributing center, rolled into LaFayette over a route described as "smooth as any." Merchants and cotton buyers advertised that they paid  $\frac{1}{8}c$  more per pound for cotton than Atlanta, Ga., and from  $\frac{1}{8}c$  to  $\frac{1}{4}c$  more than other towns in the section. Also, they sold goods "as cheap and cheaper than the other towns." The slogan at LaFayette was "Bring your cotton to LaFayette and prices will talk for themselves." A town now *on the move*, it was all attributed to the Dummy, its new 65 ton Baldwin engine, "a beauty," and "a dandy," thrilling the countryside as it steamed along, trailing black smoke. Its capacity was twelve to fifteen cars.

The LaFayette Railway, whose road bed, though overgrown, may still be seen in many places, lives in memory and a bit of verse that has come down through the years, with variations, as follows:

*Some folks say that the Dummy won't run.*

*Just let me tell you what the Dummy is going to do.*  
*It will leave Opelika at half past two,*  
*And get to LaFayette at the setting of the sun.*

*Let me tell you what the Dummy done done.*  
*Left LaFayette at the rising of the sun.*

*Got back to LaFayette at the setting of the sun.*  
*That's what the Dummy done done.<sup>9</sup>*

As the old timers used to say along the LaFayette Railway line, "Look out for the Dummy when the whistle blows." It blows no more, but its timeless echo is still heard.

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Notes:

<sup>1</sup> Reports, Chief Engineer Dexter, March 3, 7th, 1836; courtesy J. C. Mixon, President-General Manager, Atlanta and West Point Rail Road Company.

<sup>2</sup> Letter of Dexter in *American Cotton Planter*, May 1853.

<sup>3</sup> *The Alabama Manual & Statistical Register for 1869*, p. 126-7.

<sup>4</sup> *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama*, Fleming, p. 605.

<sup>5</sup> *Alabama Rural Electric News*, July, 1956.

<sup>6</sup> Courtesy Miss Marjorie Andrews, LaFayette, Ala.

# HISTORY OF THE BANK OF STANDING ROCK

## *Standing Rock, Alabama*

By J. E. ROBINSON

Located not far from West Point, Georgia, is an interesting place with a unique name—Standing Rock, Alabama. Curious why such a community should be so named, but there is a large upright stone, painted white with red lettering, spelling out its name. A few buildings and a store are all that remain of a once promising trade area.

Some time late in 1908, the people of this part of Chambers County, Alabama, began to think of a bank, for soon the Chattahoochee Valley Railway, extending its line from West Point, would reach Standing Rock, to connect with the then existing Atlanta, Birmingham & Atlantic Railway, (now Atlantic Coast Line) to make a small rail center. Some started their railroad work there, then moved on to other places.

For a time, the little town of Standing Rock prospered with cotton, but with the coming of the boll weevil, like many places in the South, soon began its decline.

There is a brick building with the usual corner entrance, which so many banks had at that time, still standing. It was once the Bank of Standing Rock, chartered in 1908, finally to liquidate in 1928, because its owner foresaw what so few did—the darkening clouds of the depression of the 1930's.

Many important names in this section are mentioned in the *Minutes* of the Director's Meetings during the time this small business was in operation. Data used is from the original minute book.

Remember, banking as conducted then differs considerably from today's banking. This was before The Federal Reserve Banks and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. Names and the honesty of the bankers were important.

The fact that Mr. Hines held the actual cash for his depositors, rather than place the funds in other banks, demonstrated his business acumen, and while some requested him to hold the money—indicated his honesty and foresight.



The Bank of Standing Rock was chartered on December 30, 1908, with an authorized Capital Stock of \$25,000.00 and it began business with a paid-in Capital of \$15,000.00.

The First Meeting-Organization was held January 1, 1909, with Mr. Fuller E. Callaway, Sr., of LaGrange, Georgia, being elected a temporary Chairman and Mr. C. E. Hines as temporary Secretary.

Capital Stock was issued 250 shares of the par value of \$100.00 each. The amount of Capital with which the Corporation will begin business is \$15,000.00.

The names and addresses of the incorporation with the number of shares subscribed for by each is as follows:

Fuller E. Callaway	LaGrange, Ga.	125 shares
J. H. Hines	Standing Rock, Ala.	50 shares
C. E. Hines	Standing Rock, Ala.	50 shares
Hines and Sons	Standing Rock, Ala.	25 shares

The entire amount of the paid-in capital of Fifteen Thousand Dollars, with which the Corporation will begin business, will be paid in cash with the exception of the sum of Two Thousand Dollars, which will be paid in by J. H. Hines, C. E. Hines and Fuller Callaway in form of the bank building and lot, which will be owned by the bank.

In the same organizational meeting it was provided that the term of office of the named officers elected at the annual meeting would serve one year, and until the next annual meeting. It was agreed that none of the officers should draw salaries for the first year and that the employment of a bookkeeper be left to the discretion of the Cashier.

The term for which said Bank of Standing Rock is incorporated is twenty (20) years, with the right of renewal at the expiration of said period.

The minutes of the organizational meeting has this as its last paragraph:

"Said Corporation shall have all the rights and powers conferred upon banking corporation under the laws of the State of Ala-



bama and under the special provisions under which this bank is incorporated.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 30th day of December, 1908.

A. J. Driver, Jr., Judge of Probate, Chambers County, Alabama."

Report at the close of business on January 6, 1910, one year later:

RESOURCES:

Loans and Discounts	\$23,862.97
Demand Loans	3,000.00
Banking House	2,000.00
Furniture and Fixtures	612.47
New York Correspondent	4,966.57
Birmingham	1,602.55
Expense Account	875.17
Cash on Hand	2,698.73
	<u>\$39,618.46</u>

LIABILITIES:

Capital Stock	\$15,000.00
Interest and Discount	1,017.19
Exchange	291.27
Individual Deposits	23,310.00
	<u>\$39,618.46</u>

Records reveal that on January 14, 1911, a dividend of \$5.00 per share was paid to each shareholder. This was from the earnings of the first year of operation.

The statement of condition on December 13, 1910:

RESOURCES:

Loans and Discounts		\$29,848.84
Banking House		2,708.14
Cash on Hand	\$3,537.48	
With Banks	6,476.34	10,013.82
		<u>\$42,570.80</u>

LIABILITIES:

Capital Stock	\$15,000.00
Undivided Profits	2,305.24
Deposits	23,283.05
Certificates of Deposits	1,545.75
Cashier's Checks	436.76
	<u>\$42,570.80</u>

They showed the income broken down:

INCOME:	
Interest and Discount	\$ 3,764.36
Exchange	581.92
	<u>\$ 4,346.28</u>
DISBURSEMENTS:	
Expenses	\$ 1,798.71
Interest Paid	242.33
	<u>\$ 2,041.04</u>
Net Earnings	2,305.24
	<u>\$4,346.28</u>

The Bank of Standing Rock was organized before the C. V. Railway finished its seventeen miles of track extending north from West Point to tie in with the then A. B. & A. Railway. This event happened in the summer of 1909, and a small railway center in a then prosperous farming area was created.

It was Mr. Fuller Callaway who stated, "this community needs a bank," as Standing Rock was already a collecting point for cotton, which was being sold to the mills at West Point and LaGrange, Georgia.

This small town had two large farm supply businesses, selling to farmers of Troup County, Georgia, and Chambers and Randolph counties of Alabama. Hines Brothers operated one of these. They also had a Gin House and a Cotton Warehouse. They were, in addition, the cotton buyers of this section. The other store was operated by Baker Brothers.

The Bank of Standing Rock made considerable progress, as is shown by these figures:

DATE	TOTAL RESOURCES
December 30, 1911	\$ 42,960.08
December 31, 1912	48,053.78
December 31, 1913	66,468.22
December 31, 1914	51,776.55
December 31, 1915	41,293.66
December 31, 1916	67,391.34
December 31, 1917	78,696.06
January 14, 1919	78,884.88
January 6, 1920	106,891.25
January 8, 1921	102,248.19
January 14, 1925	133,409.78
January 5, 1926	116,359.26
January 20, 1928	103,196.43

On February 9, 1928, this notice appears in the minute book of the Bank of Standing Rock:

"Where-as in the opinion of the Board of Directors it is wise to liquidate the Bank of Standing Rock, and where-as the bank is abundantly solvent and able to pay all creditors in cash, we, the Directors undersigned hereby order the Officers of the Bank of Standing Rock to call a meeting of the stockholders for the purpose of considering the question of voluntary liquidation."

s/s C. E. Hines

s/s S. W. Hines

s/s H. C. Bailey

Thus the Bank of Standing Rock went into voluntary liquidation on March 1, 1928. Mr. C. E. Hines served as Liquidating Agent for the Trust.

The depositors of the bank did not call immediately for their money, and it was over six months before they finally came in and drew out their money. Some even then were asking Mr. Hines to hold it for them. Of course, he was out of the banking business and could not accept further deposits.

When Mr. Hines made up his mind to close his bank by liquidation, he appeared before the State Banking Department for permission. After some debate, Mr. John Brandon, who was the Secretary of State at that time, stated that he did not want to see this bank close shop, that it was one of the best operated banks in the state, and if Mr. Hines would continue to operate it, he (Mr. Brandon) would send to the Bank of Standing Rock one of the most promising young men he knew to run the bank for him.

Mr. Hines told Mr. Brandon that his charter had expired and there was nothing more he could do, so the bank would liquidate, which it did.

Today, in Standing Rock, Alabama, there is a weathered brick building which once housed the Bank of Standing Rock, its entrance typically in the corner. Though a bit aged, and slightly forlorn, it is still a solid looking edifice, splendid evidence of a business which served a community for twenty years as an important addition to this or any other town.

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*Note:* This paper was read by Mr. Robinson at the meeting of the Society held at the home of Miss Mary Ruth Shaefer on September 24, 1959.

## BOB BOWEN'S BANK OF FIVE POINTS

*Five Points, Alabama*

By J. E. ROBINSON

The Bank of Five Points was organized prior to 1916 at Five Points, Alabama, in Chambers County, the exact date of organization being unknown to me. It was located in the brick building which still stands at the intersection of the LaFayette, Alabama, and Five Points roads. It operated at a time when many small banks were needed, when transportation was difficult, and farming the chief occupation of the area.

Mr. R. N. Bowen, a native of Chambers County, Alabama, organized the Bank of Five Points. Mr. Bowen had worked many years in the North as a salesman, when he returned to his home in Chambers County to live with his mother and sister. He was in his middle years at this time.

Through the efforts of Mr. Bowen, familiarly known in the community as "Bob Bowen," the bank was organized and he became its president. The Directors of the Bank of Five Points were:

R. N. Bowen, Chairman

J. V. Trammell

Lee Trammell

E. W. Smartt

D. B. Prather

Authorized capital stock of the bank is said to have been \$50,000.00, of which Mr. Bowen owned the controlling interest.

In 1919, Mr. D. A. Williams, a native of Pike County, Alabama, was employed as Cashier. He was nineteen years old, and had just completed a business course at a school in Montgomery, Alabama. Mr. Williams was said to be the youngest bank cashier in the United States. He held this office until February 24, 1923, when he resigned to accept employment at Fairfax Mill of West Point Manufacturing Company, Fairfax, Alabama, where he has remained. He is at present Overseer of the Huck and Crash Finishing Department. After his resignation,

Mr. Homer Lee, of Welch, Alabama, became Cashier of the Bank of Five Points.

Mr. Williams recalls that he and the janitor were the only salaried employees of the bank. It is interesting to note that the president, Mr. R. N. Bowen, received no salary.

The Bank of Five Points operated successfully for a number of years, serving the many farmers in the Five Points area. Its territory was not very large, since both nearby LaFayette and Roanoke, Alabama, had two banks each, and, in addition, there was the Bank of Standing Rock at Standing Rock, Alabama. The Bank of Five Points was completely solvent when it voluntarily liquidated in 1926.

It is interesting to learn something about Mr. R. N. Bowen, the president of the Bank of Five Points. He had, for the times, very progressive ideas of schools and schooling. We would probably say today that he was "ahead of the times."

He became interested in promoting a consolidated school for the area to be located at Five Points. This would replace the one-teacher country schools thereabouts, and the children would be transported by school bus to Five Points. The surrounding communities, however, did not want to give up their schools, and they bitterly opposed the plan. We must remember that this was in the day of dirt roads, and trucks had crude homemade bodies in which to bring the children to school.

Consolidated schools was a new idea, the state having only one at that time. Five Points Consolidated School became the second in the state. Because of his active part in promoting the consolidation, Mr. Bowen became unpopular with the people of the nearby communities, and this reflected somewhat on the business of his bank.

The building for the new school was constructed from private funds supplied by Mr. R. N. Bowen. When completed, it was discovered that there was no legal means for the county or state to reimburse him. Mr. J. V. Trammell, of Five Points, ran as a candidate for the state legislature and was elected. He introduced a measure to provide means to secure payment to Mr. Bowen, and the measure passed the legislature.

Mr. Trammell and Mr. Bowen had both worked hard to get the new school to replace the two room frame building which had served Five Points up to that time. Mr. D. A. Williams recalls that the building



had a lighting system and a water system, both then unknown in rural schools.

The Bank of Five Points was the business venture of Mr. R. N. "Bob" Bowen, and he was possessed of business acumen as well as a philanthropic spirit. After the Bank of Five Points was liquidated and all depositors paid in full in 1926, Mr. Bowen left Alabama and went to New Orleans. He told friends at that time, "I shall never return except in a little black box."

Robert Newton Bowen was born August 6, 1866, and died in New Orleans on September 17, 1934. Returned to Five Points, he lies in the Bowen family plot in the Five Points Cemetery. His parents were John L. Bowen, born December 1, 1827, died January 23, 1914, and Electa Walker Bowen, born February 24, 1839, died February 2, 1922. They, and other members of the family, are buried there.

The substantial, two story brick building constructed by Mr. "Bob" Bowen for his banking venture still stands, the fancy metal grilles today protecting the windows of the old banking floor, now a grocery store. It is a poignant and constant reminder of his public spirit. The Five Points School is a monument to his pioneer effort to give a better educational opportunity to the boys and girls in the Five Points and neighboring communities.

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*Note:* This paper was read by Mr. Robinson at the meeting of the Society held at the home of Miss Mary Ruth Shaefer on September 24, 1959.



## NOLAN PLACE

### *The Plantation of Burnt Village*

By SARAH NOLAN FLETCHER

Our home is known in this area of Chambers County, Alabama, and Troup County, Georgia, as the Nolan Place. It will not be an easy task to condense the chain of thought I have regarding my life long home. Since I have known it, it was owned by my parents, Ernest Jack and Helen Ferrell Nolan.

To dig back into history, it was a land grant to my great grandfather, Blount C. Ferrell, of LaGrange, Troup County, Georgia, and prior to the year 1793, part of this plantation was the location of the Muscogee Indians, on Land Lot 44 in the 16th District. It is twelve miles west of LaGrange, and six miles north of West Point, Georgia. The Indian village was on the west bank of the Chattahoochee River, where the Wehadkee Creek pours its waters into the river.

It was the crossing place of all trading and marauding parties of the Muscogee Nation, where the untamed savages met to arrange and carry out their attacks upon the helpless and unprotected settlers on the outskirts of the white settlements. It was after one of their attacks that a few hundred men led by a Major Adams succeeded in burning the village and conquering them, on September 27, 1793.

According to historical accounts, the site is known as "The Burnt Village," and we now raise cotton and corn on this land. The only reminders left today are the arrowheads and pottery shards collected by our children through the years.

Imagination alone can picture the flat field on the plantation known as the "Race Track Field," where the Indians raced their horses. In addition to the fine cold water spring on the place, there is a warm spring. The Indians bathed their babies in the warm spring.

The first step preceding the organization of the territory acquired from the Creek Nation of Indians, was the complete survey and subdivision of the whole area, following the signing of the Treaty of Indian Springs, Georgia, in 1825. The Land Districts were laid off with a fair degree of accuracy and the boundary lines closely approximate due East

and West—North and South. These subdivisions were made before the counties were created by the General Assembly of Georgia. They were distributed by lottery to the citizens who could qualify. The eligibility requirements were three years residence in the State and those participating in the Revolutionary War, on date of December 11, 1831.

In the 16th Land District, known as East Vernon, No. 42-43 and 44 Land Lots were granted to my great grandfather, Blount C. Ferrell. Adjoining Land Lots, No. 45-46-47 and 48 were granted to my great grandmother's father, Mickleberry Ferrell. Blount Ferrell gave to his son, Clarence A. Ferrell, who was my mother's father, 1,200 acres, and this is where I live, Nolan Place, about which I am giving you this history.

Clarence Ferrell was married to Camilla Jane Chisholm, the daughter of Jack and Arrie Chisholm, who came to this section and located near Fredonia, Alabama, on a plantation known as the Orme Place.

When my mother was five years of age, my grandfather joined in the war of the Confederacy. Their home then was located a short distance back of the home in which we now live. Grandfather Clarence had begun building their home before going into army service, and upon his return home, completed it.

Many years later, grandfather Clarence gave this plantation to my mother. It is not the proverbial Colonial design, but it is interesting for its age, and is one of the few still in existence in the area, giving testimony of the fact that our forefathers built wisely and well. To us, it is a mansion in comfort and privacy, having a wonderful view almost equal to that of mountains. It has many old and seasoned magnolias, hollies, jasmine, lilacs and boxwoods, including a hedge of the tree boxwood, which gives a charm unequalled by any surrounding places.

The original magnolias, hollies and tree box came from my great grandmother, Sarah Coleman Ferrell, of LaGrange, Georgia, whose garden has been famous over one hundred years. It was known as "Ferrell's Garden," and loved and cared for by her many years. She died in 1903, at the age of 86, and Judge Ferrell, at the age of 92 years, in 1908. Four years later, Fuller E. Callaway, Sr., purchased the property, which is now known as "Hills and Dales."

The boxwood hedge mentioned above is trimmed at Christmas, and

I make many beautiful wreaths, some of which I always place on the cemetery lot of my parents and grandparents, located in LaGrange. Regardless of the hurry and excitement of the holidays, I find the greatest peace of mind, like a benediction, seeing the beautiful green wreaths, with the large red bows blowing in the wind—then I relax, and am ready for the rush of Christmas!

The plan of the house is the usual one of large rooms divided by a long, wide hallway, with an arch in the center of the hall. It was under this arch that my husband, Walter, and I were married, June 24, 1919. The old kitchen was originally in the rear, with an open passage to the main house, and the kitchen wing included the dining room. There were double doors at each end of the hall, and entering it from either doorway, the arch was very prominent.

My mother told me of the marriage also, under this arch, of two of the descendants of the Ferrell slaves, Hettie and Steve Ferrell. They were servants in the home. After the wedding, my grandparents gave a big barbecue in the back yard of the place, inviting all the slaves on the plantation. "Aunt Hettie," and "Uncle Steve," as we knew them, lived and raised a large family through the years on this place.

When our first child was born, "Aunt Hettie" was Nolan's faithful old Negro mammy whom we all loved. One of their sons, Mansfield Ferrell, was the butler and faithful servant of my parents until the plantation was divided between my immediate family. Mansfield then moved into "town" and was the yard man of Miss Phyl Davidson in West Point until his death.

On the 1,200 acres of land of the plantation, cotton was the chief crop, but my father was a good provider, and believed in raising everything possible in the way of food. He was truly what we now call a diversified farmer. He always had a large orchard of fruits and berries. The pear orchard is still in existence because of his careful planting. He had huge holes dug and the rich soil from the river bottoms was hauled in to fill the holes after the trees were set. All the neighbors thought it was very foolish to spend so much time in planting.

I can remember that we had apples practically the year round, which were packed in clean, sifted, dry sand in barrels for safekeeping. He was far in advance of the agricultural procedures of the time. He prophesied many methods being carried out today, and always had the latest machinery, which he generously would lend to his neighbors.



Schooling, as far back as I can remember, was very crude—Reading, 'Riting, 'Rithmetic, Geography and Spelling, were the main subjects, but taught and learned well. Mrs. Mary Lou McIntosh Adams was the beloved teacher in a one room log hut, located on the adjoining McIntosh Plantation in a lovely grove.

I was the youngest of our family, but was allowed to go on occasions with my brother Clarence, my sisters, Minnie Blount (who is Mrs. R. A. Johnson), Helen, (who is Mrs. Clyde Brown of West Point), Frances, (who is Mrs. J. M. Blalock, Columbia, S.C.). I recall going one day to school in the spring. Our path passed a wooded area where beautiful old hickory trees had been cut. The urge to play hookey from school was too tempting, and we spread our lunch on a large hickory stump and did not go to school.

Why, I can almost taste the baked potatoes, and syrup and sugar biscuits! The mistake of returning home earlier than usual was questioned by my mother, and Clarence told her Mrs. Adams had to attend a teachers meeting in LaFayette, Alabama. To his sorrow, the truth was later known, and he was punished—mostly for telling a story.

During those days, my oldest sister and brother, Camilla and Gaines Huguley, were constantly entertaining relatives and friends. I looked forward to the house parties, which were always attended by Alfred and Daisy Zachry (now Mrs. John Banks, of Opelika, Alabama), and Mrs. Abbie Callaway Allen, of LaGrange, and her brother, Ely. Others were Paul Potts, whom my sister married, and Lula and Alfred Cumbee, and many others.

The nearest church was Wehadkee Baptist Church, and is still in existence. It was established in 1849, on Land Lot No. 17, in the 16th District. My mother was one of the Sunday School teachers, and she always entertained the preachers at the Quarterly Meetings, having as many as thirteen on various occasions. Needless to say, preparation of foods for these days started early. Tea cakes, thick, syrupy ginger cakes, persimmon beer made in charred kegs in which layers of baked sweet potatoes and ripened persimmons were fermented and aged, were all readied. Sometimes, when the table groaned with the great variety of old and favorite Southern dishes, syllabub was served.

In 1915, the narrow front porch of the home was torn away, and my father replaced it with a spacious rock and cement porch, which runs completely across the front of the house. There was plenty of



labor then, and the floor was filled in with rock and sand, hauled in with two-horse wagons. It has been enjoyed more than any other part of the home, shaded as it is by the huge magnolias and the holly tree.

History has a way of repeating itself, so in the generation in which I was a young lady, we, too, entertained a lot. We were in the horse and buggy days, so mainly it had to be house parties. Some of you present were possibly among the groups enjoying the hospitality of Nolan Place in those dear days.

After my father's death in 1933, my mother came to live with us on the portion of land we inherited, on which we built a modest home. It is in Troup County, Georgia, across the State Line Road from that part of Nolan Place in Chambers County, Alabama, and is bounded on the east by the Chattahoochee River.

The old home place which I have described is located on the Chambers County portion of the place, and is now in our possession as our home. It was vacant for seven years, and became badly in need of repairs. In 1949, we restored it, making only the needed changes.

The old open passageway, which divided the main part of the house from the dining room and kitchen, was enclosed for a utility room and bath. The back porch floor was lowered to ground level and paved in order to provide inside steps. The old smoke house was converted into a "Hobby House," which many groups have enjoyed, especially the Boy and Girl Scouts of the area.

Along with many varieties of bulbs, we raise quantities of daffodils, and the above groups and garden club members gather them for shut-ins and the hospitals. There are many, many magnolias, so we named the place "Magnolia Hill."

For the sake of future reference, (for had I been able to refer to information of this nature, I would have been more informative in this story), Mrs. John T. Williams owns and lives on the adjoining place, once known as the Huguley Place, and it was my mother's first home by her marriage to Amos Gaines Huguley.

The Calvin Smedleys are our nearest neighbors, on part of the old Nolan Place lands. Virginia Adams Mundhenk (Mrs. R. L.), the granddaughter of our first school teacher, lives on part of the old McIntosh Plantation. Alice Zachry, and Mary Zachry Scott, (Mrs. W. H., Sr.)

lands, the Atkinson Estate, and the E. J. Collins Place, are our other boundaries. C. W. "Bill" Brown, son of Mrs. Helen Nolan Brown, owns the portion of the old Nolan lands immediately back of our location.

In 1950, a small group of our neighbors met in our home and we organized a very needed and successful community, namely, Piedmont Heights. At the Piedmont Heights Community Club, the Chattahoochee Valley Historical Society erected through the Georgia Historical Commission an historical marker for *The Burnt Village*, which I would like to read into this record of Nolan Place, the plantation of "The Burnt Village."

The Muscogee Indian village of Ocfuskenena was 1000 yards from here. Nearby shoals in the river formed an ancient crossing for traders and travelers going west of the Chattahoochee. On September 27, 1793, a group of Georgians, seeking to destroy the village, whose warriors had raided their outpost settlements, gathered on the bank of the river, waited until dark, and, with their guns and powder held over their heads, waded the river to attack the sleeping village. A few warriors escaped into Alabama. The town was burned and became known as "The Burnt Village" from the charred posts that marked the site for many years.

Now that we have brought you up to date, my story is ended with the invitation that you visit with us at "Magnolia Hill," formerly known as the Nolan Place.

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*Note:* This paper was read by Mrs. Sarah Nolan Fletcher at the meeting of the Society held at "Homewoods" the nearby estate of Mr. and Mrs. Edmund F. Cook, on June 23, 1960. A tour of "Magnolia Hill" house and gardens followed.



## INDEX

*Note:* Use of this index will add greatly to the understanding and enjoyment of the Confederate Soldier Letters. Where possible, persons mentioned by *given name, surname, or nickname* in the text are more fully identified here. The reader should be alert for this feature. Other contents of the *Bulletin* are separately indexed, following immediately the Letters section.

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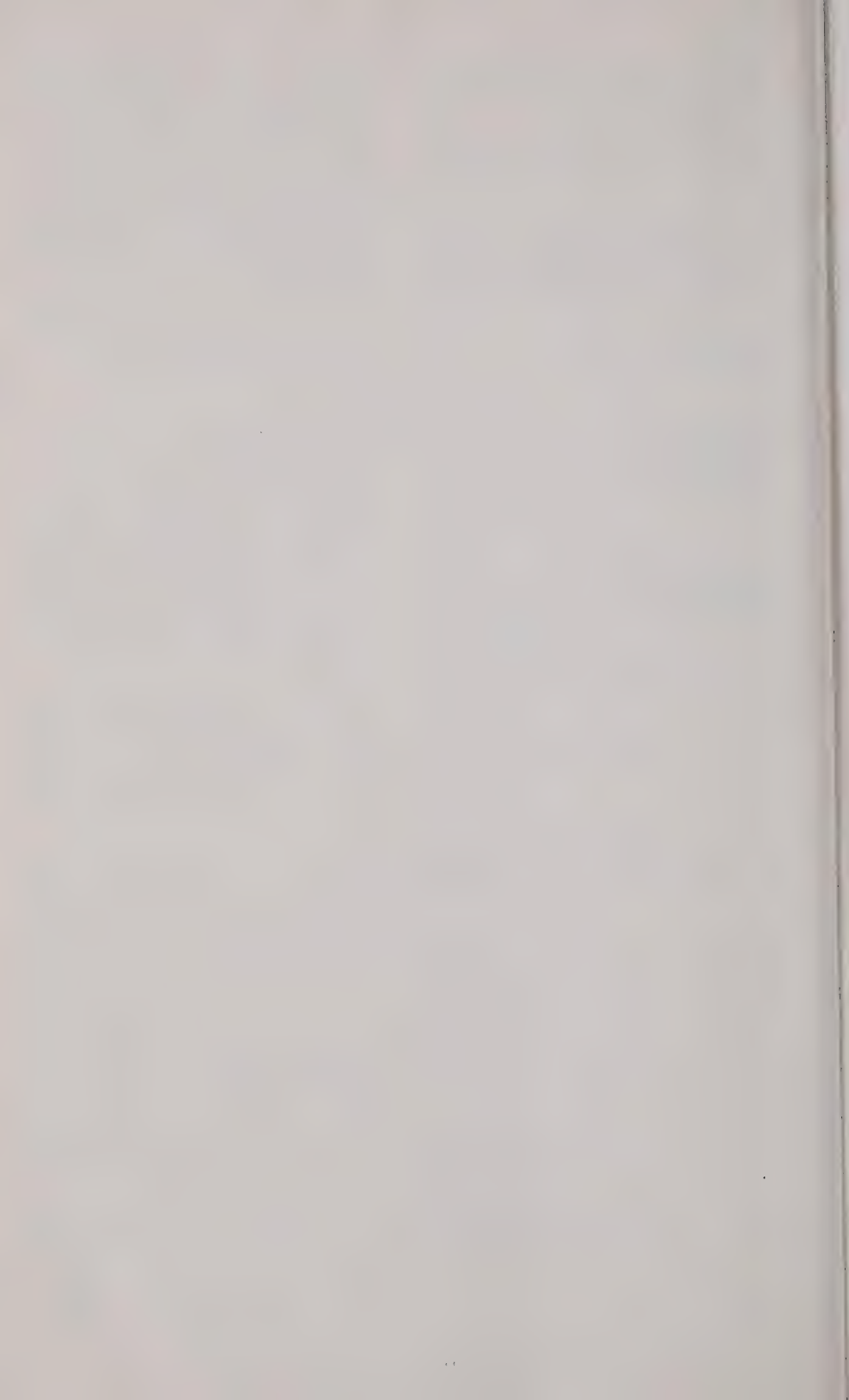
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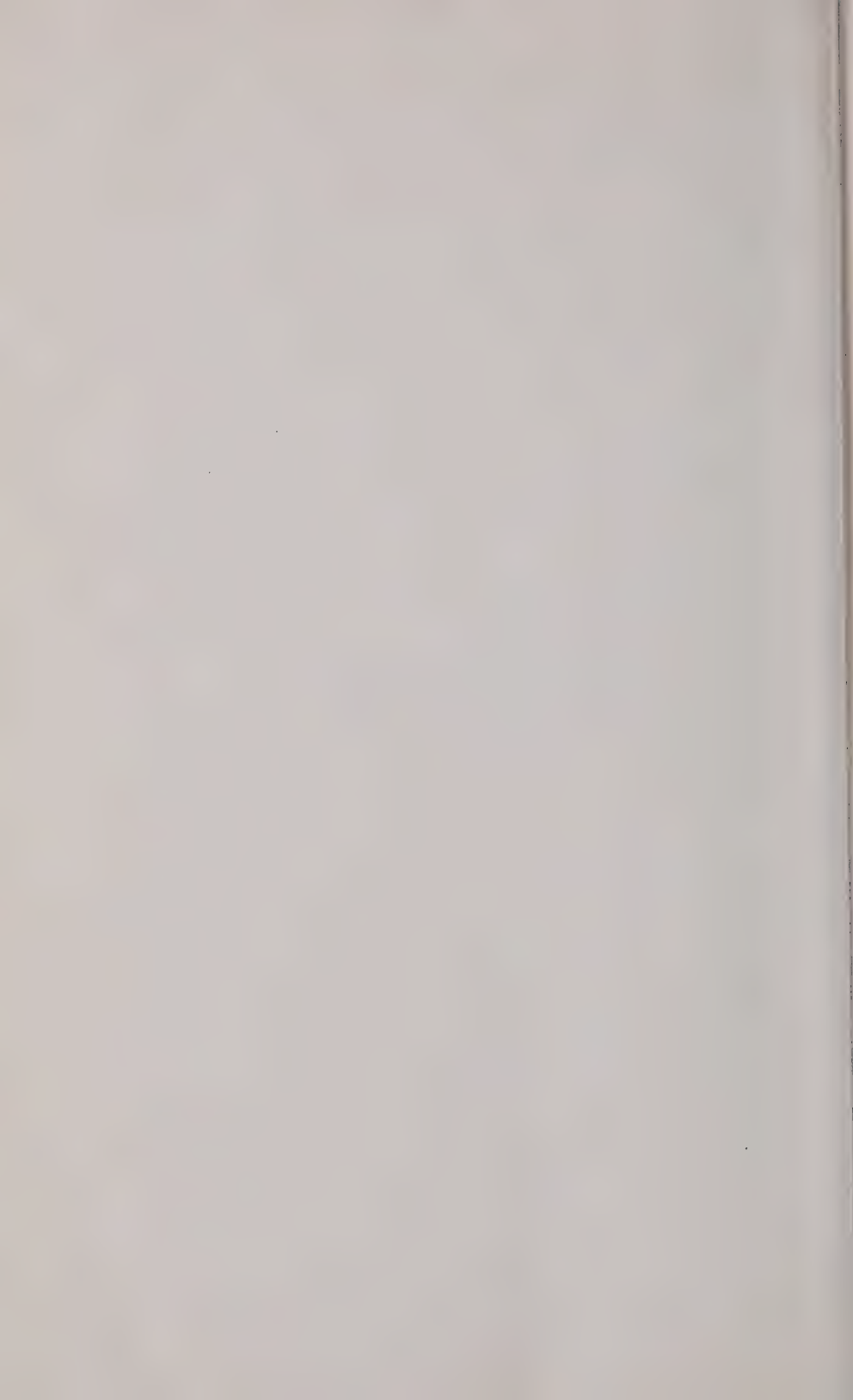
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## Illustrations





Veranda of Greene House, built c. 1832. Now home of Comdr. (Ret.) and Mrs. F. H. MacElvain.



Interior, the Greene House, July, 1960.



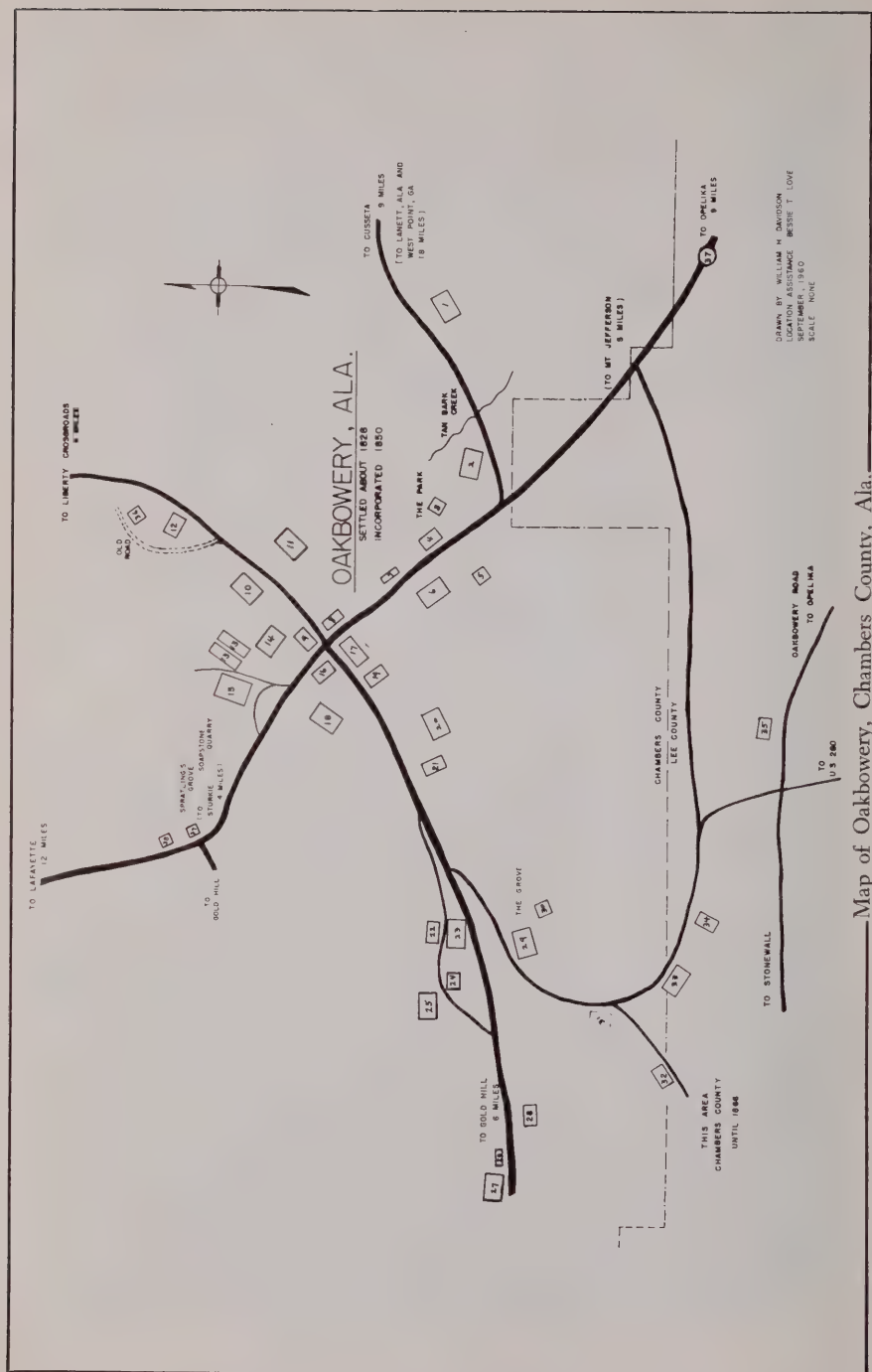
McCurdy House, built c. 1848.





Doorway, McCurdy House, built c. 1848.





Map of Oakbowery, Chambers County, Ala.

# LEGEND FOR OAKBOWERY, ALA., MAP - EXISTING HOUSES AND OLD SITES

1. Greene House. Built by Jack Heaton c. 1832.
2. McCurdy House. Built c. 1848.
3. Freight Station, LaFayette Railway, c. 1896. Site.
4. Pavilion, c. 1896. Site.
5. James Dowdell Family Cemetery, 1854.
6. Gen. Robert Lee Bullard House, erected 1850 by James Dowdell. Site.
7. Ann Smith House, c. 1840-45. Site.
8. Passenger Station, LaFayette Railway, c. 1896. Site.
9. Oakbowery Cash Store, 1960.
10. Page House, c. 1840-45.
11. Preer House, c. 1840-45.
12. Major William Kirk House, c. 1835-40.
13. Oakbowery Female College Buildings, c. 1848-1849. Site.
14. Parsonage, Oakbowery Methodist Church, c. 1895.
15. Oakbowery Methodist Church, c. 1897, on site of 1842 church.
16. Slave Market, c. 1850. Site.
17. Oakbowery Postoffice; discontinued 1908.
18. John Riddle House, c. 1846. Site.
19. Evangelist Sam Jones' Boyhood Home. Site.
20. East Alabama Masonic Institute, c. 1849. Now Negro Methodist Church.
21. Oakbowery Masonic Lodge No. 108, c. 1848-49. Not original building.
22. Old Oakbowery Cemetery, c. 1830.
23. New Oakbowery Cemetery, c. 1858.
24. Gov. Samford Childhood Home, c. 1840-1850. Ruin.
25. John Dixon Harris House, c. 1875-80.
26. Norwood Plantation Log Cabin, c. 1835-40.
27. James M. Norwood House, c. 1845-50.
28. Hester Family House, c. 1840-45.
29. Brittain Harris House, c. 1850. Site.
30. Camp of Yankee Occupation Troops, 1865-1867. Site.
31. Garrett Morris House, c. 1850.
32. A. J. "Ab" Allen House, c. 1846.
33. Daniel Pierce Hightower House, c. 1840-45.
34. Flat Rock Baptist Church, for Negroes, c. 1880.
35. John Cotter House, c. 1840.
36. Unknown Plantation House Site.
37. William P. Spratling House, c. 1894.
38. Elias H. Avery House, c. 1845. Home of Mr. and Mrs. Ben H. Andrews



Gen. Robert Lee Bullard-James Dowdell House, built 1850.



Bullard-Dowdell House, rear. Photographs courtesy Library of Congress.  
Other photographs by Harold Smith, July 1960.



